

THETFORD TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Tuesday, August 22, 2017
Thetford Elementary School Art Room

APPROVED MINUTES

Shannon Darrah convened the meeting at 6:34 p.m.. The following were present: Julie Acker, Charlie Buttrey, Shannon Darrah, Kristen Downey, Scott MacPhee, School Board; Kevin Petrone, TES Principal, Keith Thompson, OESU Assistant Superintendent (arrived 6:43 p.m.)

PUBLIC PRESENT: Christine and Kevin Perron, Sarah Nunan, Jessica Eaton, Jill Graff

AGENDA REVIEW: Agenda approved with amendments.

MINUTES REVIEW: MOTION: (MacPhee/Buttrey) moved/seconded to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2017 Board meeting (unanimous approval).

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ORDERS: MOTION: (Acker/Downey) moved/seconded to approve accounts payable orders # 6121 and 6101, and payroll warrant # 6105 (unanimous approval).

PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE: Kevin Perron informed the Board it is not an acceptable decision to change the morning drop off time from 7:30 to 8. Perron acknowledged that the TES administration struggled with the decision, however, this change really affects parents' work plans. Perron expects there will be kids unsupervised in the morning. He asked the Board to change the decision. Petrone responded that the change is the result of staffing difficulties. The para staff had been covering the morning duty, but the paras have a 7 hour contract. This means for a para to staff 30 minutes in the morning, 30 minutes would need to be taken from later in the instructional day, which has implications for students with IEPs. Perron repeated that the work day starts at 8am for parents, and reported that he contacted other area schools. No other schools have this issue because the school day begins earlier than 8:30. In response to Perron's question, "why the sudden change", Petrone stated there were times during the winter there was no staff to cover the 7:30 to 8am morning duty. Petrone tried his best to prepare the parents by notifying them in July of the change. Perron repeated this is going to cause great difficulty for working parents. Petrone asked that Perron ask these parents to contact the school. MacPhee offered the idea of splitting the difference and starting morning drop off at 7:45. Perron agreed this would be an improvement. Downey clarified that may not happen, especially with such short notice. Downey acknowledged there are many decisions parents have to make regarding school and work logistics, and the Board anticipated that parents would have to make adjustments in their work schedules. Perron responded that he cannot adjust his work schedule. Downey suggested reaching out to other parents for help. Downey stated there is not enough time now to change the plan by the first day of school on August 30, but the Board can keep addressing this issue as the year goes on. Petrone stated that TES was lucky to have Brittany Bemis covering the morning

drop off last year, but she has moved. This job was on a volunteer basis, and Bemis stepped up to do it. Petrone didn't want to make this change in the middle of the year when he realized he couldn't staff it. Petrone stated that TES was the only school that offered an entire hour of coverage before school. Perron asserted that the school's start time should have been adjusted instead to start at 8am so that the 7:30 drop off time would not have changed. Perron stated this change affects the entire community and some of those community members have no control over their jobs; he has spoken with many people who have expressed this. Darrah stated those people need to come to the Board with their concerns. C. Perron stated she heard there is a petition. She has suggested to those with concerns to attend a school board meeting. Perron stated the Board should have polled the community and gotten feedback before making the decision. Darrah replied the decision was made out of necessity because of staffing. Downey added that only two people have contacted the Board. The Board welcomes public comment and ideas, including parents organizing care before school, or if parents want to contact TASP. Perron responded that involving TASP results in a new financial burden for the parents. Downey stated the school start time is not a Board issue; the Board is here to support Petrone and make decisions that are good for kids. The Board is open to brainstorm ideas. Perron repeated that the community should have been notified much earlier that this was a problem, as then he would not be reacting this way; instead he would have been part of the solution, but now it is too late. Darrah thanked the Perrons for coming.

TA REPORT: (Darrah): Most of the three hour meeting took place in executive session. Enrollment is about 317 students, a few students below the projected enrollment. There are returning international students, but no new international students. Other area schools have also seen a drop in new international student enrollment.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Kevin Petrone): Petrone has hired the additional para the Board approved, as well as the unfilled para position. Bridget Veracka will be the para in a 5th grade classroom, and Rosie Wysocki will be a special education para in grades K -2. TES is now fully staffed, except for a band teacher. In addition to Kindergartners, there are 15 new students for a total enrollment of 196. There are five new boys in 5th grade. Downey reported she met a family who has a new student in the 6th grade. The parents shared their family was really happy with their visit. School starts August 30. There are two teacher training days focused on the responsive classroom. The opening assembly is at 9am in the gym. The upgrades to the gym corridor are now complete. The key card system has been installed on the side door by the gym. There is also video on this door that communicates with the office. Holds have been installed on two of ten climbing wall panels. Installation of the outdoor musical instruments, funded with grant money, is being planned. The trail to TA was washed out and is not passable. Northwoods is planning on repairing it for free. Part of the solar area was brush hogged.

REVIEW AND DISCUSS BUS ROUTES FOR 17-18: The Board received email correspondence from Amy Bosco regarding changes to bus #3's route. The email called attention to a reversal in the direction of the afternoon route, resulting in some children being the first to be picked up in the morning and the last to be dropped off in the afternoon, making for a long ride

in both directions. Sarah Nunan expressed concern about the danger of students riding up Gove Hill unnecessarily in the winter. Darrah indicated it was not the Board's decision to make this change. In years past Bus #1 has reversed its route in January, but the bus always runs in the same direction in the morning and the afternoon, so that any one student is not riding for a long time in both directions. Jessica Eaton said Butler's dispatcher changed Bus #3's route. Thompson stated the Board has a say in the routes. Darrah suggested having all three routes reverse the same time of year, and at the very least, the routes need to be the same in the morning and afternoon. Petrone stated he has no opinion, but added it doesn't make sense for some children to have long rides in both directions. Darrah concluded that buses #2 and #3 should be run in the same direction mornings and afternoons. Acker pointed out that TA has already posted the bus schedule and school starts Thursday. There are not specific drop off times in the afternoon. The morning times will not change. Discussion followed. Acker suggested surveying the parents to help decide about changing the route mid way through the year. Petrone and Thompson will communicate with Butler, and Butler will need to notify TA.

DISCUSSION RE: HIRING TREASURER FOR SCHOOL BOARD: TTSD is considering hiring a treasurer. Bradford and Oxbow each have their own treasurer. Similar to Thetford, Newbury's town treasurer takes care of the school's needs. Darrah invited town treasurer, Jill Graff, to attend tonight's meeting to get an idea of the role of this paid position. It is state statute that if there is no school treasurer, the town treasurer is responsible for school treasurer duties. Graff feels it is a good idea for TTSD to have its own treasurer, because she is not involved in the financials directly and she does not have the ledger. Graff manages the cash flow by making deposits at the bank and signing the checks. She ensures there is money in the checking account and collects all the education taxes. In the past, because the school account typically had good fund balances, the town would keep a little bit of the school's money, because of delinquent taxes (most of which are education taxes). When TTSD can't make ends meet in June, they get that money back from the town. In addition to taking over Graff's school duties, a school treasurer would take over part of Cynthia and Darla's roles at TES. Graff is leaving in 18 months and hiring one person to take care of the town and school's treasurer needs would be way too much for a new person. Thompson added that Graff does a lot of work for the school. Graff and Becky are the only authority persons who can sign things, so they often get pulled away from their town duties. A school treasurer would work with the OESU accountants and the town treasurer. Graff suggested looking at what Darla and Cynthia do to determine the time needed for this new position. Graff thinks it is overdue to have a school treasurer. Thompson agreed it would be very helpful. The school treasurer could come to board meetings quarterly. The Board thanked Graff for all she has done. Discussion followed. Darrah suggested that a treasurer from an OESU school could inform the Board of the role. Thompson distributed Bradford's treasurer job description. Graff is paid an hourly wage and her tasks for the school are absorbed into it. Graff stated that it's not so much the hours, but the responsibility that is always looming and multitasking for the town and the school. If Graff resigned her school duties, perhaps the school could appoint a treasurer until the next election. The selectboard has never addressed the time that Graff spends on school because it is state statute. Acker suggested warning the school treasurer and

having the town vote on whether the school board can appoint that person. There would then be a year for Graff to transition the new treasurer.

RESIDENCY REQUEST (Jillian Knotts): Knotts' family is moving to Thetford in September. In the meantime, she would like her daughter to start at TA as a 9th grader, as opposed to attending another school for a few weeks and switching to TA after the school year is underway. Knotts stated they are planning to rent, but the home is not ready to occupy now. She is hoping to move in September and has not signed a lease. Thompson stated that the Superintendent can sign a waiver after Borst checks the address with the landlord. Borst has to sign the residency certification. In response to Downey's question about a contingency plan if there is no rental agreement, Thompson stated there is a window of time after the anticipated move in date, that if the rental agreement falls through, the agreement with TTSD is nullified. Thompson agreed to facilitate with the Superintendent tomorrow. The Board has nothing more to do with it. Knotts gave Thompson the property address and her contact information.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Student Matter): MOTION: (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 8:08 p.m. to discuss a student matter. Out of executive session at 8:30 p.m. No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: (MacPhee/Buttrey) moved/seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. (unanimous approval).

FUTURE MEETINGS:

9/5/17	OESU Meeting	6:00 p.m.
9/19/17	Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m.

Minutes Prepared By:
Amy Bosco, Minutes Clerk

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Julie Acker, Board Clerk