

**SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPRINGFIELD, VERMONT 05156
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS MEETING
Monday, February 1, 2016**

Vision Statement

We, as an institution, are the catalyst for renewal in our community.

Open Meeting

Springfield High School Library

Present: Jeanice Garfield, Laura Ryan, Ed Caron, Steve Karaffa, Ken Vandenburg

Also meeting with Board: Zach McLaughlin, Superintendent; Steve Hier, Director of Fiscal Services; David Cohn, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment; Ryan Cooney & Ericka Schoff, Student Reps.; Judy Spaulding, Recording Secretary

Also present: Bob Thibault, High School Principal; Bindy Hathorn, Union Street Principal; Dana Jacobson-Goodhue, Elm Hill Principal; Mike Griffin & Brenda Richardson, Budget Advisory Committee members.

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

Changes and Additions to Agenda

Zach has an addendum to his report. He also has an updated draft calendar.

Steve H. has an update on the solar project and the audit.

Announcements and Recognitions

Zach announced that Patty Kelly, Instructional Coach for math at the K-5 level, is a recipient of an Iris Carl Grant through the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics. She is one of three receiving this nationally. She will be honored at the national conference for up & coming math leaders in Oakland in April. All her expenses will be paid for through this grant.

Jeanice recognized Ken Vandenburg for his nine years on the board and countless hours of work that he has given to the school district. He was presented a plaque and thanked for all his contributions. He will be missed on the board.

Citizens Comments

None

Consent Agenda

MOTION: Steve K. moved and Ken seconded to accept the December 14, 2015, January 4, 11, & 19, 2016 meeting minutes.

Vote: All in Favor

Motion passed

Board Representatives/Board Committees/Administrator Reports

- Board Committees
 - ◊ School Properties Committee: No updates
 - ◊ Negotiations Committee: Ken is willing to continue on this committee after he goes off the board until board reorganizes to keep with consistency and knowledge of the process. The meetings are continuing.
 - ◊ Policy Committee: They will be meeting next week.
 - ◊ Nutrition committee: They are working on a Wellness Policy that will expand the nutrition policy to include other facets of wellness.
- River Valley Technical Center: Meeting on Wednesday, February 3. Jeanice will send out the superintendent's report.
- Admin Reports were contained within the Board packet and were not discussed.
 - ◊ Zach thanked Ken for his time on the board. He is a crucial member of the board. He has lots of experience, asks good questions, uses a common sense approach and is not afraid to have difficult discussions.
 - ◊ Addendum to the Superintendent's Report – Zach summarized a Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA) letter about changes the legislature made to the Allowable Growth Provisions (AGP). The changes are not affecting our budget directly but they may have an indirect impact on the yield. The second addition is the finalization of the adequacy study performed by Picus and Associates. Zach had spoken of this at a previous meeting. The final report contains 291 pages and he included the link if anyone wants to read through it. He specifically pointed out their recommendation of one Instructional Coach for every 200 students. At a future meeting the board could go over this study and look at how we compare.

- Elm Hill Primary School – Proposed New Kindergarten Transition presentation by Dana Jacobson-Goodhue, Becky Spaulding, School Counselor & Andie Bentley, Kindergarten Teacher.
 - ◊ Kindergarten Registration last year
 - ~ It was held in May and included screenings (OT, speech, vision and hearing), the children met their teacher and the nurse and paperwork was completed.
 - ~ Last August/ September there was an orientation for parents and students. The teachers did home visits that took three full days; then children started coming to school in A and B groups. A/B days are inconsistent for children developing routine. Daycare needs and costs were hard on parents.
 - ◊ Proposal for Kindergarten Registration this year
 - ~ In May parents and students would come in to complete paperwork, meet the teacher and nurse.
 - ~ In August/September we would hold a “Kinder” Camp for 3 half days prior to school starting to ease in whole class without other grade level distractions in the building (includes orientation for parents); screenings (OT, speech, vision, hearing) would be done during September rather than May (children are 4-5 months older);
 - ~ Transportation? Has not yet been worked out
 - ~ Nearby districts:
 - ◆ Bellows Falls has a “Scamp Camp” which is 3 half days that takes place before school begins, takes the place of home visits and orientation. No transportation is provided.
 - ◆ Chester has a “K Camp” which is 3 half days before school begins that takes the place of home visits. They have an orientation “open house” that is the night before the first day of school. No transportation is provided.
 - ~ In summary, the team would like to do away with home visits, A/B days and offer instead a “Kinder” Camp. Transportation would be most helpful to make sure all children can attend.

Financial Business

- Warrants were signed. No questions were asked.
- Financial Report
 - ◊ As of January 25 the budget reflects a potential expenditure surplus of \$16,065. This is an increase of \$6,435 from the surplus projected last month. No questions were asked.
- Financial Management Questionnaire
 - ◊ In December Steve H. presented this questionnaire. By law, the Board is to review the document within two months of receiving it. The answers are the same as they were a year ago with the following two exceptions: Have there been changes in authorized signatures during this year? Jeff Mobus’ name was removed as he no longer holds the position of Assistant Treasurer; and Do you participate in any business which does business with the School District? Steve H. disclosed that he is the Town and School Treasurer for Weathersfield. His signature appears on checks that pay the tuition invoices for Weathersfield’s high school students attending Springfield High School. He is not involved in the verification or authorization of these bills but he does sign the checks.
 - ◊ Ken brought up his concern of having just one signer on the district’s account. Steve H. said that Barbara will be appointing an assistant treasurer and that person could be a second signer.
- FY17 Budget
 - ◊ Recap – There are four items going into town report to summarize where we are in the budget process. The FY17 budget is \$74,000 less than current year. This reduces the residential tax rate by 6.1 cents and reduces the non-residential rate by .5 cents. There were 14 positions cut in the proposed budget which is on top of about 25 positions that were cut within the last couple years.
- Audit
 - ◊ The hard copies came in today. Steve handed them out to the board. It’s a clean audit (no issues). Steve would like to wait until the March meeting for a more in depth discussion of it.
- Solar Update
 - ◊ To recap, Springfield along with eight other districts joined a consortium. The plan is to build solar fields and sell us power generated. There are two vendors, SunEdison and Aegis Nexamp. The board voted to move ahead. Since then the SunEdison projects had to be approved and Green Mountain Power (GMP) had reached their solar power cap before the SunEdison proposal was submitted. GMP said they will not purchase that power. SunEdison will not proceed to build their project. A consortium consultant is working with other solar developers whose rates are not as good. They are working with all the schools in the consortium to see if they

are still interested. Most other companies offer around a 24% discount (SunEdison was a 32% discount). Aegis Nexamp's project is already approved at a 36% discount that would cover approx. 40% of our electrical usage. We are signed onto this project. We could try to fulfill the rest of our needs by another solar project. The consortium has felt that all the schools participating should receive the same discount rate. If we share the savings, it would be in the mid 20% range. It isn't our decision but we are in a good position at this point.

Old Business

- Emeritus Proposal for Ed Wilkins.
 - ◇ Zach spoke on information within the packet. Emeritus status is written in the teacher's contract. Teachers who work for 20 years are eligible for \$14,500 stipend upon retirement. If a teacher has 15 years of service and agrees to retire, the next school year they work approximately two days a week and is paid at 40% of the current salary or the maximum allowed to earn by the state (whichever is less). They forego the stipend to be able to work part time in the district. A teacher who has experience and knowledge can ease into retirement while still offering back to the district. This would be beneficial to both the district and to Ed. He would continue to teach his "Introduction to Composition" course which is a dual enrollment course for both our students and Community College of Vermont. He will also prepare the high school for the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) self-study work in 2018. He has been actively involved with this organization and the work that is involved. To have Ed willing and able to do this work would be most valuable in this process. No one in district has his level of experience in the NEASC work. The cost of this proposal was anticipated and has been included in the FY17 budget.

MOTION: Steve K. moved and Ken seconded to approve the Emeritus Status Agreement with Ed Wilkins for the 2016-2017 school year.

Vote: All in favor

Motion passed

New Business

- 2016-2017 Proposed School Calendar.
 - ◇ Zach passed out a revised draft that has a few changes from the one included in the packet. The most significant changes were moving an Inservice Day from October 7 to October 21 and an early Release Day from October 6 to October 7. There were a few other typographical errors that were corrected. The calendar is developed with RVTC to align with their sending schools.

MOTION: Ken moved and Steve K. seconded to approve the proposed 2016-2017 school district calendar.

Vote: All in favor

Motion passed

- Re-appointment of Gladys Collins as a representative to the SEVCA Board.
 - ◇ Gladys is our Pre-K Coordinator. She has just completed a term on their Board and has agreed to serve another. SEVCA's Board is made up of three sectors – Public, Private, and Clients. It makes sense to include her on their board as SEVCA is involved with Head Start. Steve K. would like her to report back to the board about this role and the work that is being done.

MOTION: Laura moved and Ed seconded to appoint Gladys Collins as a representative to the SEVCA Board for the period ending October 2017.

Vote: Jeanice, Laura, Ed & Steve K. in favor
Ken abstained

Motion passed

- Setting time for Superintendent Evaluation.
 - ◇ Jeanice had sent out information about the evaluation process. February 10 at 6:30 p.m. works for everyone in the Park Street Conference Room. They will use the VSBA grid as a guideline. Jeanice also sent the members the report from last year.

Board Comments

- This section will be used for comments by board members that are not part of the agenda and don't need any action. It could be something for a future discussion.
- Jeanice mentioned that some K-12 students will be singing "These Green Mountains" at Town Meeting.
- Jeanice had a letter from VEHI regarding rates for FY17. The new rate is up 7.9%. The regional meetings are open for board members. There is one at RVTC on March 8 from 4:00-6:00. If a new board member expresses interest in negotiations, they should attend this meeting.

Next Board Meetings

- February 29 – Town Meeting at 7:30 at the High School. Cafeteria
- March 7 – Regular School Board Meeting (reorganization of Board). Zach will include information in that board packet on how the reorganization process works.

MOTION: Ken moved and Laura seconded to recess the open meeting to go into Executive Session at 8:06 p.m.
Vote: All in favor **Motion passed**

Executive Session

High School Classroom

Present: Jeanice Garfield, Ed Caron, Steve Karaffa, Ken Vandenburg, Laura Ryan, Zach McLaughlin
Also present: Lisa Hall and Bindy Hathorn

Jeanice Garfield declared us in executive session at 8:15 p.m.

Review of a public employee response to a concern.

Jeanice declared us out of executive session at 9:05 hours.

Respectfully submitted
Ed Caron, Clerk

Adjournment

MOTION: Steve K. moved and Laura seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m.
Vote: All in favor **Motion passed**

Respectfully submitted,



Judy Spaulding, Recording Secretary