

THETFORD TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Tuesday, October 18, 2016
Thetford Elementary School Art Room

APPROVED MINUTES

Shannon Darrah convened the meeting at 6:32 p.m.. The following were present: Julie Acker, Shannon Darrah, Kristen Downey (arrived 7:05 p.m.), Scott MacPhee, School Board; Kevin Petrone, TES Principal; Keith Thompson, OESU Assistant Superintendent

PUBLIC PRESENT: Tim Briglin (arrived 7:02 p.m.)

AGENDA REVIEW: Agenda approved with amendments.

MINUTES REVIEW: MOTION: (Acker/MacPhee) moved/seconded to approve the minutes of the September 20, 2016 Board meeting as amended (unanimous approval).

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ORDERS: MOTION: (Acker/MacPhee) moved/seconded to approve accounts payable orders # 5677, 5697, and 5683, and payroll warrants # 5689, 5691, 5671, 5432, and 5614 (unanimous approval).

PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE: An email was received from a resident regarding Kindergarten entrance age. The policy is fairly open. Although it is good to be aware that having a restrictive age on entrance to Kindergarten could be difficult for parents, there is no action needed from the Board; the communication was for Petrone's consideration.

PRESENTATION BY RIVERBEND TECHNICAL CENTER STUDENTS:
Postponed.

TA REPORT: Darrah reported 339 is the current enrollment. She recounted that Bugg spoke about the ongoing professional development work with UVEI. Partnership agreements were discussed, excluding that for TTSD as it runs through 2019. Lyme and Stafford's agreements expire in 2016. Budget development is beginning. There will be a lot of communication back and forth between the TA and TTSD Boards. Darrah is on the TA budget committee. A Thetford Board Representative must sit on that committee, per the partnership agreement. The joint meeting with the two Boards will be scheduled during budget season, also per the partnership agreement.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Kevin Petrone): The sledding hill has been moved and seeded. During a recent professional development day on October 7, the staff had crisis prevention training with TES special educator, Kristen Hansen. The training focused on verbal de-escalation. Although para-educators were not required to attend, several did. Hansen also taught physical restraint to five TES staff members, including Petrone (no

classroom teachers were trained). If a classroom teacher needs help, they use radios to communicate. In the afternoon, teachers worked on Project Based Learning. Last Friday, nearly 250 students, staff, and community members participated in the Hike for Hunger, to the top of Houghton Hill. The food drive is ongoing. The King Arthur Flour, Bake for Good initiative took place at the same time. KAF provided a presenter for the 4th and 5th grades. Each child was given materials to make one loaf of bread to donate to Willing Hands and one to keep. Teachers have been preparing for Back to School night, which is this Thursday, from 5:30 - 6:30. Student work will be on display. Petrone will be meeting with teachers regarding teacher growth models and goal setting (two goals). Two-thirds of the staff are setting their own goals and choosing professional development, while the remaining staff participates in the formative phase with more guidance from Petrone. Petrone stated there is a need for one additional para-educator for the current year, either in Bradley's 3rd grade or in Rogers' 1st grade. Those two classes are currently sharing one para. There are 15 paras on staff, reduced from 18 in the previous year. Downey stated that schools tend to over use paras and it is a big expense. She suggested looking into what strategies other schools have used to reduce the need for paras. While Downey supported Petrone's request, she questioned the need for so many paras, and suggested seeking out research on appropriate use of paras, and to stay mindful of spending. Petrone reported that in the upper grades, the para reduction has gone well. In grades 4, 5 and 6, each grade level shares one para. Thompson stated he is running a budget model around staffing. **MOTION:** (Downey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to approve the addition of one para-educator for the current school year (unanimous approval).

PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE UPDATE: Acker reported the committee walked around the TES grounds with Kevin Brown to discuss maintenance of the recent plantings. This will be figured into an amount to allocate to the buildings and grounds fund for the playground. The committee is compiling a comprehensive look at the grounds, including the playing fields. Acker estimates an approximate additional \$2,000 every year, which will also take care of neglected maintenance. The committee will have a budget to present in November..

ACT 46 UPDATE: Briglin stated it is getting close to the time when legislators are preparing to propose changes to Act 46. Darrah stated TTSD is in a holding pattern now. Downey stated there is a meeting on October 26 with the Sharon, Strafford, and Tunbridge group, regarding forming an alternative structure. It is still uncertain if this group has a study grant to explore possibilities. Darrah reported she asked at a recent OESU meeting if the reconfigured OESU would allow TTSD to be a singular side. Waits River asked the same. Good things are happening in OESU. If TTSD can't find other options, TTSD would like to stay with OESU. It makes financial sense for all for TTSD to be a side to OESU. Briglin asked how many students are in the OESU group (Oxbow, Blue Mountain Newbury, and Waits River). Thompson responded the new OESU will have ~1,500 - 1,600 students. Thompson explained finances are determined by the number of teachers, not the average daily membership. Briglin stated there are two things to be aware of from the last legislative session, but were deferred. 1.) Jim and Tim

introduced legislation that would allow for a singular side by side, such as an appendage to an SU. This is of interest to the Waits River Valley SU as well. They will introduce that legislation again. 2.) The State Board of Education outlined draft rules for how an alternative district could be formed. Briglin's interpretation was that these rules would make it more challenging to form an alternative structure. There has been some push back from legislators. A group of Washington County senators have opposed this. There are enough districts around the state that are interested in an alternative structure, which will make it difficult for the State Board of Education rules to stay in place. Darrah recounted a discussion at the recent TA Board meeting that could affect Strafford. Their partnership agreement with TA is up for renewal. TA educates most of Strafford's students with special education needs. There was discussion about the stress on TA to serve all these students well, within TA's current resources. Ideally, Strafford would also send their students who do not have special education needs to TA. It is currently a generous opt out policy. Discussion will be continued at the next Board meeting. Lyme is different because they don't designate TA because they are in NH. TA only guarantees acceptance to Lyme students in 9th grade. After 9th grade, Lyme students must apply. The language in the Strafford agreement is more similar to Thetford's. There is no limit on the grade for acceptance, and all students are accepted. Thetford and Strafford each pay a flat fee for special education per student, ~\$3,000. Darrah has encouraged collaboration between the TA and Strafford School Boards. Briglin stated that what Strafford is doing is allowed by State statute. At last week's TA open house, there were more students from Lyme than in past years. The fifth and sixth graders from Thetford have been playing sports with Lyme, and they are creating relationships. Briglin encouraged the Board to reach out to him with suggestions for potential changes in Act 46 that would make things easier for Thetford. Other towns may be having similar issues, and if so, Tim can identify those legislators to gain support for such changes.

UPDATE OF TEACHER NEGOTIATIONS: No update. Downey and Buttrely are meeting tomorrow.

DISCUSS BUDGET TIMELINE: The Board has to vote on a warning and post it publicly between 1/26/17 and 2/5/17. The warning is what people see when they vote. The warning goes into the school report. Thompson will have a first draft of the budget for the November 1 meeting. Darrah stated someone is needed to put together the school report; either a Board member or someone outside the Board is hired. The report has to be available before pre-school meeting for review. Darrah asked Thompson for preliminary information about the state of TES facilities, specifically the phone system. Thompson is striving to have 3 to 5 year facilities plans for all OESU schools. There will be a safety audit at TES in November. Bruce Avery is going to get OSHA certified. There will also be a security audit. There could be budget impacts as the result of these audits. Thompson suggested the Board review past annual reports to assess condensing relevant information into a 3-5 page pamphlet-style report. Other towns have moved toward this model and it saves money. Thompson is gathering samples which he will share with the Board for consideration.

DISCUSSION OF NON-RESIDENT TUITION POLICY: Postponed

EXECUTIVE SESSION (STUDENT MATTER): MOTION: (MacPhee/Acker) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 6:33 p.m. to discuss a student matter. Out of executive session at 7:01 p.m. (No action taken).

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: (Acker/Downey) moved/seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m. (unanimous approval).

FUTURE MEETINGS:

11/1/16	Thetford Town School District Meeting (Oxbow)	6:00 p.m.
11/1/16	OESU Meeting (Oxbow)	7:00 p.m.
11/15/16	Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m.
11/29/16	Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m.

Minutes Prepared By:
Amy Bosco, Minutes Clerk

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Julie Acker, Board Clerk