

**THETFORD TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Tuesday, January 10, 2017**  
**Oxbow High School**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

Shannon Darrah convened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.. The following were present: Julie Acker, Charlie Buttrey, Shannon Darrah, Kristen Downey, Scott MacPhee (arrived 6:45 p.m.), School Board; Kevin Petrone, TES Principal

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** None

**AGENDA REVIEW:** Agenda approved with amendments.

**MINUTES REVIEW:** MOTION: (Buttrey/Acker) moved/seconded to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2016 Board meeting (unanimous approval).

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ORDERS:** MOTION: (Acker/Buttrey) moved/seconded to approve accounts payable orders # 5810, 5789, and 5786, and payroll warrants # 5806 and 5782 (unanimous approval).

**PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE:** A letter of intent was received from Moriah Fahey stating she would like to be placed in a TES classroom during the 17/18 school year as soon as an opening occurs. Petrone stated there is a retirement this year, but pending more information about student enrollment and classroom configurations, it is not clear yet this position will be filled. According to the contract, TTSD is not under any obligation to provide a classroom position. No action to be taken.

**PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Kevin Petrone):** The first round of interviews with 7 candidates began this week for the social worker/ guidance/psychologist position. There is a larger candidate pool as a result of a wider job description. Petrone hopes to have someone starting by the end of the month. Seven TES staff members volunteered to be part of the interview team. Priorities are someone long term, consistency and a good match within the school. Ski Fridays begin this week. During professional development the teachers will be looking at project based learning, and related self assessment. The following two weeks, four teachers will lead professional development based on interests or course work. Colin McLaughlin is running a hands on science workshop; Moriah Fahey will lead a math fluency workshop; Sara Bailey will review challenging student behavior; and Jacqueline Porter will present an introduction to the responsive classroom.

Petrone meets with Bill Bugg monthly. They have set up three meetings between TES 6th grade teachers and TA 7th grade teachers related to expectations, curriculum, and planning. Buttrey asked if there are any particular areas that TES students arrive more or less prepared. Petrone responded that math has been an issue mostly because students were not placed appropriately in the three math levels. A math placement test given in 6th grade and teacher recommendation are

used place students in math classes. Downey commented a placement test and tracking are not recommended at this age.

There have been significant issues with the heating system recently, with regular repairs by ARC over the past month. Petrone hopes to make it through the season without having to shut down school for more extensive repairs and evaluation, like flushing the lines. TES has two boilers, and they are using just one now. Next Monday there is no school for Martin Luther King Day, but special educators from TES and TA will be attending a compliance workshop at OESU.

**FINANCIAL REPORT - FY18 Budget another look. Set FY18 Tuition Rate:** Merrick stated the announced tuition number is a bit arbitrary, and is announced to satisfy the State. Buttrey stated the school board could charge any amount to an individual. Downey added, why would the Board charge any less than the announced tuition, in order to avoid any perceived or real favoritism or discrimination. The allowable tuition is up to \$15,000. Tuition to TES is currently \$12,000. Buttrey stated he does not want to discourage families from tuitioning in to TES. Currently there are no tuition students. This does not apply to TA. MOTION: (Downey/Buttrey) moved/seconded to set the FY18 tuition rate at \$12,000 (unanimous approval). Acker pointed out the tuition is in line with the rest of the elementary schools in OESU, \$11,000 - \$13,000.

The CLA went up, which is good news. TTSD is in penalty. Even with the penalty, there is a 0.9% decrease in the estimated local homestead tax rate. Merrick is waiting to hear from TA about how much of their tuition is debt service. That could drive down the penalty. The Board had asked Merrick to calculate \$50,000 and \$100,000 set aside for capital improvements or tuition reserve. This budget does not include either amount. Buttrey expressed concerns about potential repairs for the heating system. Merrick stated there will probably be a deficit for the current fiscal year. Discussion followed regarding calculations.

Darrah stated the reduction in the tax rate would be lost if funds for capital improvements are set aside via a separate warned article. Acker suggested creating a capital reserve fund while keeping the tax rate flat. Discussion followed. TA is voting on their tuition figure this week. Merrick used \$18,628 and added 2.5 students as a "cushion." In addition, for every student on a 504 plan, there is a \$1,000 case management fee due to TA. Accordingly, Merrick added \$30,000. Discussion followed: should TTSD warn \$50,000 for capital improvements as a separate article, or add it as a fund transfer in the budget? Fund transfer was agreed upon. Buttrey confirmed with Petrone that all retirement announcements have been made.

Acker asked about the decrease in revenues from the State. Merrick answered this is related to vocational transportation, which is no longer TTSD's cost. The cost is going to TA. Acker also noted that the line item for library and technology has increased. Merrick responded there is an increase of \$12,000 for equipment lease.

**SCHOOL REPORT PLANNING DISCUSS TIMELINE FOR TOWN MEETING AND PRE-SCHOOL MEETING:** Acker indicated she wants to present the annual report using more visuals than words. Discussion followed. Merrick and Thompson have been striving to condense the budget report to make it more reader friendly. Acker mocked up a draft of a small brochure. It should be an 8.5 x 11 with a very simple presentation. Budget details will be available at Town

meeting. Downey will be responsible for the content, and Acker will take charge of the layout. Acker has already contacted Bill Bugg for key financials and photos. Downey and Acker will decide on the critical headings, such as enrollment and TA tuition. Town meeting is March 4 at TA. Voting is on March 7. Pre-school meeting will be February 28 at 7. Discussion followed regarding timing of the mailing. Acker estimated needing eight 8.5 x 11 pages. She needs to estimate printing costs.

**TEACHER NEGOTIATION UPDATE - EXECUTIVE SESSION (Teacher Negotiation Strategy):** MOTION: (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 6:50 p.m. to discuss teacher negotiation strategy. Out of executive session at 7:08 p.m. No action taken.

**ACT 46 UPDATE:** Darrah stated TTSD will be asking the State for the option to stay in the reconfigured OESU. There is currently no plan for TTSD to merge, create a new district, or SU. TTSD needs to submit a proposal to the State by July 1. Downey stated the alternative structure group plans to hire a consultant. There may be changes in April to the alternative structure rules. Chelsea voters voiced they may not want to have a high school. Chelsea and Tunbridge are pursuing a merger. It is not clear if they would want to join the alternative structure. On January 25 the WRSU is meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION (Tuition Policy):** MOTION: (Buttrey/MacPhee ) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 7:08 p.m. to discuss the tuition policy as discussion may identify individual students. Out of executive session at 7:15 p.m. No action taken.

**ADJOURNMENT:** MOTION: (Downey/Acker) moved/seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m. (unanimous approval).

**FUTURE MEETINGS:**

1/17/17 Thetford Town School District Meeting

6:30 p.m.

Minutes Prepared By:  
Amy Bosco, Minutes Clerk

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

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Julie Acker, Board Clerk