

THETFORD TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Tuesday, March 13, 2018
Thetford Elementary School

DRAFT MINUTES

Shannon Darrah convened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. The following were present: Julie Acker, Charlie Buttrey, Shannon Darrah, Kristen Downey, Scott MacPhee, School Board; Kevin Petrone, TES Principal

PUBLIC PRESENT: None

SWEARING IN OF BOARD MEMBERS: (Dan and Dana Grossman, notary publics): Charlie Buttrey, Kristen Downey

Dan was School District Moderator for 17 years and Dana served on the School Board for 9 years, and was Board Chair for 8 of those years. The Grossmans recounted that Buttrey was first sworn in as a School Director in 1993 and has served since then for a total of 25 years. Buttrey clarified that he did take a few years off. Downey was elected in 2016. Buttrey and Downey were thanked for their service. Further remarks from the Grossmans: “These two school directors exemplify the tradition of community service at its finest: Being willing to take a turn at these important positions. Being willing to stay for a period of time to make the best use of experience. In some cases, being willing to watch your children go from kindergarten to senior in high school—and then continuing on well after they graduate. This generation owes the next generation of citizens an excellent public education. We as a society, and you as school directors, have a responsibility to discharge that duty most carefully and with great vigor. Year after year after year. People tend not to think much about being sworn into a public office. But our General Assembly WANTS school directors to pay attention to being sworn in to discharge this responsibility. To encourage people to pay attention, Section 56 of the Vermont Constitution provides for oaths that are made under the pains and penalties of perjury so that school directors will reflect on the seriousness of their responsibility to provide for the public education of the next generation of citizens.”

BOARD REORGANIZATION: MOTION: (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to nominate Darrah as Chair (unanimous approval). **MOTION:** (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to close the nominations (unanimous approval). Darrah accepted the nomination. **MOTION:** (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to nominate Downey as Vice-Chair (unanimous approval). **MOTION:** (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to close the nominations (unanimous approval). Downey accepted the nomination. **MOTION:** (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to nominate Acker as Clerk (unanimous approval). **MOTION:** (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to close the nominations (unanimous approval). Acker accepted the nomination. **MOTION:** (Downey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to nominate Acker, Buttrey and Darrah as OESU representatives (unanimous approval). **MOTION:** (Acker/MacPhee) moved/seconded to reappoint Darrah to

serve as TA representative (unanimous approval). **MOTION:** (Downey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to close the nominations (unanimous approval). Darrah accepted the nomination.

AGENDA REVIEW: Agenda approved with amendments.

MINUTES REVIEW: **MOTION:** (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2018 and February 27, 2018 Board meetings (unanimous approval).

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ORDERS: **MOTION:** (Acker/Buttrey) moved/seconded to approve accounts payable orders # 6363, 6357 and 6355, and payroll warrants # 6362 and 6353 (unanimous approval).

PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE: Petrone presented a letter from para-educator, Cheryl Paine, informing the Board of her retirement effective June 30, 2018. Paine has worked at TES for 27 years in addition to years serving as a volunteer and substitute teacher. The Board expressed enormous gratitude for Paine's service. She will be missed.

TA REPORT (Darrah): There were several committee reports. The bicentennial committee has been formed. The plan is to infuse the bicentennial celebrations into existing activities throughout the year. There has been a donation to fund a book. Event planning will involve teachers, students, trustees, and the community. Strafford's budget passed easily. Darrah reported on TTSD's town meeting. There has been a lot of interest from Chelsea students. Buttrey stated TA Head of School, Bill Bugg, is optimistic. There was a long executive session.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Kevin Petrone): Today was the 5th no school day (4 snow days and one due to a power outage). The last day of school is now Monday, June 18. The ski program ended last Friday. Due to cancellations the kids missed one ski day. The program ended on a great note with fresh snow. The alternative program at TES had a winter carnival with sledding, snow sculptures, and a bonfire with smores. TA and TES are coordinating calendars for next year. A couple of days are not in sync but the calendars are the closest they've been in recent years. Mud season madness started last week with activities on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the month of March. Sarah Atherton is the coordinator. Classes are run by teachers, TA students, community members, and parents. TES receives many compliments on this program. The math committee has been meeting twice per week. They are investigating new programs. Laura Sharpless has been gathering materials from various publishers to decide what to share with the larger staff for discussion. TES is coordinating with TA. TA math teacher Melissa Perry is part of the committee. Parent Leif LaWhite has volunteered to be on the committee. TA is also looking at new math programs. Special educator, Jennifer Clogston, is retiring. There are four candidates for her position so far. On March 29 Ramona McCullough will be visiting classrooms to give feedback in the context of the Responsive Classroom. March 30 will be the last training with her. There is no school that day. TES is not participating in the March 14 school walk out. However, there will be an all school assembly dedicated to community connections to highlight the importance of building healthy relationships. The school

will sing some songs and listen to a story. Thinking ahead to next year, Petrone is planning to pilot an enrichment block on Fridays on the off days that the all school meeting does not happen. This is a 45 minute block of time that could be used for specials including Spanish and rehearsal for the school musical. Petrone plans to try it for 4-5 Fridays this year and if it works well, will implement it next year.

DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF HIRING A SCHOOL TREASURER: Jill Graff is retiring. Darrah suggested inviting a treasurer from an OESU school to attend a meeting to share their job responsibilities. The treasurer is appointed, not elected. The position would be very part-time. Acker wondered if another OESU school treasurer would be interested. Graff had advised the Board that the new town treasurer does not have enough time to also serve the school. Darrah would like more explanation about this. Per state statute if a school district does not have a treasurer, the responsibility defaults to the town. Downey stated she believes the town is planning to hire a treasurer. Darrah wants to know all the facts before making decisions and advertising for the position. She plans to ask Stuart Rogers for an update about the town treasurer. The assistant treasurer is also retiring. Discussion followed.

DISCUSS PROPOSAL FOR MEETING WITH SECRETARY HOLCOMBE ON 3/14: The meeting will take place as a conference call due to weather. Darrah distributed conversation points suggested by the AOE. What does TTSD think our region should look like? Downey asked if there is an arrangement that could save money and offer educational opportunities for kids, since that was the goal of Act 46. She has not seen any plans that look like they would meet those goals. Downey suggested asking Holcombe what plans she thinks would save money and help kids. All the potential pathways TTSD pursued either fell apart or were too expensive. Discussion followed. Joining OESU or WRSU are the options. The Board would like to know Holcombe's recommendation. Buttrey asked, which SU would be most beneficial to TA? Discussion followed regarding special educators and economies of scale. There are some unknowns about what these SU's are going to look like in the future, especially OESU. Acker made reference to a statement by Joe Nolin, the Waits River Board Chair: It's not our job to decide what's a good SU to be in. It's our job make whatever placement we're in work for us. The SU is a service organization providing services for the district. Darrah summarized that valid arguments could be made to join either SU. There are pros and cons to each. MacPhee will not be at the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS: Strategic plan discussions will begin at the March 27 meeting.

Acker reported Superintendent Stanley suggested not having local board meetings on the same night as the OESU meetings. Currently there are two TTSD meetings per month: one in Bradford and one in Thetford. Stanley says the only districts that have a meeting in tandem with OESU's are Thetford and Newbury. Having the meetings back to back puts a time limit on the OESU meeting regardless of the order of the meetings. Meeting the same night was a way to keep administrators from being out multiple nights for meetings. An option is to move to one meeting per month with some board members handling administrative duties in between. Darrah stated

this needs to be an OESU-wide discussion and it makes sense to wait for the new superintendent to start. Discussion followed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Para-educator negotiations): MOTION: (Buttrey /MacPhee) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 7:44 p.m. to discuss para-educator negotiations, the premature dissemination of which may place the Board at a substantial disadvantage. Out of executive session at 8:01 p.m. No action taken.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Personnel Matter): MOTION: (Downey/Acker) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 8:02 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter. Out of executive session at 8:06 p.m. No action taken.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Student Matters): MOTION: (Buttrey/Acker) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 8:07 p.m. to discuss student matters. Out of executive session at 8:15 p.m. No action taken.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Principal’s Contract): MOTION: (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to go into Executive Session at 8:16 p.m. to discuss the principal’s contract. Out of executive session at 8:31 p.m. No action taken.

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

FUTURE MEETINGS:

3/27/18	Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m
4/3/18	OESU Meeting	7:15 p.m.
4/10/18	Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m
4/24/18	Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Amy Bosco, Minutes Clerk

These minutes are not official until approved by the School Board