

South Hero School Board

Location: Folsom Education & Community Center

Thursday, March 15, 2018, 6 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES

Call to order at 6:20 p.m.

Reorganization of the Board

Superintendent Don Van Nostrand asked for nominations for chairman of the board. **Tim Maxham moved David Cain be appointed chairman of the board; RJ Sweeney seconded the motion; approved on a voice vote.**

D. Cain asked for nominations for vice chairman. **T. Maxham moved Melanie Henderson be appointed vice chairman of the board; Bentley Vaughan seconded the motion; approved on a voice vote.**

T. Maxham nominated Bentley Vaughan to be Clerk of the Board. RJ Sweeney seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote.

T. Maxham nominated David Cain, Bentley Vaughan, and Melanie Henderson to represent South Hero on the GISU Board. RJ Sweeney seconded the motion. Approved.

The following committee members were appointed:

-Negotiations: D. Cain nominated himself and B. Vaughan as Negotiating Committee representatives. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote.

Executive and Policy committees: The superintendent suggested the board hold off on appointments to these committees until the GISU board meets. RJ Sweeney expressed his interest in being on the Policy Committee.

D. Cain nominated the Grand Isle Sheriff's Department to be the truant officer; T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote.

Meeting Schedule: D. Cain moved to set the regular meeting schedule as the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month with no July meetings. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote.

Posting of minutes: D. Cain moved to designate the South Hero Post Office and Folsom School as the public posting spots for meeting agendas. (The South Hero Town Clerk's office is the third place to post.) T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote.

Paper of record: D. Cain moved to make *The Islander* the paper of record for the board. RJ Sweeney seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote.

D. Cain read the Code of Ethics for Vermont School Board Members from the Vermont School Boards Association. The document can be found at this link:

http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/b44bfd_c33734c8b9fc4377b1fd273ff7b17dea.pdf

Board members signed the document.

Introductions

In attendance:

-Board members: David Cain, Melanie Henderson, Tim Maxham, RJ Sweeney, Bentley Vaughan

-Staff: Don Van Nostrand, Julie Pidgeon

-Audience: Jim Jones (LCATV), Kari Banas, Bill Banas, Andre Bertmann

Adjustment of Agenda

-D. Cain noted the board will add an executive session.

Privilege of the Floor

Bill and Kari Banas welcomed back the board. D. Cain shared a letter from Heidi Chamberlain, a substitute teacher at Folsom School. She has expressed concern about the rate of substitute pay of \$75 a day, which has not changed in many years, and she has asked that the board work on that issue to make the pay more comparable to adjoining towns. T. Maxham said it was unfortunate that it was not brought up before the budget discussion. The board will put this issue on a future agenda to consider a change for next year.

Consent Agenda (Action)

A. Approve minutes from March 1, 2018. **The minutes of the March 1, 2018, meeting were approved on a voice vote.** T. Maxham made the motion to approve the minutes. RJ Sweeney seconded the motion.

Business of the Board (Discussion and Possible Action)

A. **Act 46/49 SU Boundaries:** D. Cain asked the superintendent what would change if South Hero were reorganized to another supervisory union. D. Van Nostrand noted the services that come from the supervisory union, such as transportation and special education. It would impact South Hero's assessment, and it was noted that as South Hero pays one of the higher shares of the Grand Isle Supervisory Union budget, that cost might go down if South Hero were assigned to another supervisory union and were a smaller-sized member. It would mean a new superintendent, business manager, director of special education and curriculum coordinator. The superintendent said a supervisory union reorganization would not impact board operation or school choice. He noted, however, that the secretary of education can still require South Hero to merge with another district.

D. Cain asked if the school would lose support if it were sent to another supervisory union. The superintendent said he did not think there would be a decline in services if the new supervisory union had enough resources.

M. Henderson said the board can make suggestions and recommendations to the Secretary of Education. The board can also lobby the state Board of Education if it disagrees with the secretary's recommendation.

T. Maxham asked if Supervisory Union budgets are ever broken down on a per student basis for comparison. Superintendent Van Nostrand said he has not done that but did look at Special Education costs comparative to neighboring supervisory unions and did not find a major difference.

The board discussed how a supervisory union change might impact teacher contracts. D. Cain asked if there were any laws requiring one teacher contract per supervisory union. D. Van Nostrand said there is no law requiring that. D. Cain asked if the South Hero School District could continue to negotiate the teacher contract with the new Champlain Islands district. D. Van Nostrand said that is possible. It was noted these consolidations create changes in employee supervision and contracts. The board discussed some hypothetical Supervisory Union consolidations to understand how it might affect South Hero.

D. Cain said his first choice is to stay with GISU. He said his second thought is to ask to be grouped with South Burlington because 60 percent South Hero students go to that high school and it provides for administrative continuity, particularly in special education. D. Van Nostrand noted that high school preference can change over time. D. Cain expressed the pros and cons about remaining in the GISU.

T. Maxham said the state had specific reasons for Act 46, but he has not heard anything on the realignment of Supervisory Unions and what the state hopes to accomplish and why. He said the question should be asked about what the state hopes to accomplish if it realigns supervisory unions.

He expressed a view that if there is fragmentation with Alburgh, then the GISU will be split up. D. Cain agreed if Alburgh is not part of the GISU, there is not critical mass. B. Vaughan said it's also possible the state could add someone to GISU and make it bigger. T. Maxham disagreed because of geographic isolation. Franklin West (Georgia, Fairfax and Fletcher) was discussed as a possibility for South Hero if supervisory union boundaries are changed.

The board discussed whether to send a message to the Secretary of Education on this issue. The board did not reach consensus on a message. T. Maxham said the board needs more information from the state and needs to talk with the other GISU boards.

D. Van Nostrand indicated Act 46 directs the Secretary of Education to look at cost savings from consolidations.

M. Henderson said she thought the other supervisory union boards should be made aware of the possibility. **D. Cain asked that this topic be added to GISU Board agenda.**

B. Review Results of Town Meeting

D. Cain said he thought it was a successful Town Meeting. He noted there were a couple of suggestions on improving the presentations. D. Cain expressed a big thank you to the community for its support. He also offered thanks to the PTO for helping communicate. B. Vaughan said he thought the list of changes in the budget was helpful. D. Cain said someone had suggested the spending line items be consolidated into categories for easier perusal. D. Cain noted there were many compliments on M. Henderson's presentation, as well as the students' participation in the meeting. RJ Sweeney said it was helpful to have business manager Rob Gess at the meeting to answer questions, although he was not called upon. M. Henderson expressed appreciation that Superintendent Van Nostrand, Business Manager Rob Gess and Interim Principal Matthew Brankman were in attendance.

C. 2018-2019 Academic Calendar

D. Van Nostrand reminded the board the calendar is governed by state law and master agreements. GISU is required to align its calendar with the regional tech center's calendar (that is, Franklin West and Franklin Northwest). There are a few differences due to differences in contracts. He noted that the full week off on Thanksgiving week was removed based on some feedback and past practice. It was noted there are no half-days.

D. Budget to Actuals

M. Henderson asked for information about Other Outlays and Adjustments Line 208-5210 of \$58,065.

D. Van Nostrand said he would get the answer from Business Manager Rob Gess. T. Maxham said he thinks it was a town accounting mistake that was being corrected.

D. Cain also asked about the high school tuition for the tech center, noting nothing was encumbered. He said it looked like South Hero had fewer public tuition students but had an additional 1-2 private tuitions. The tech center did not have any encumbrance yet. D. Cain's question was does the district have confidence in these numbers? **He requested more information on Lines 22, 23, 24, and D. Van Nostrand said he would have R. Gess email answers to the board.**

The board also asked the superintendent to provide Folsom's tuition rate.

E. Potential Middle School Tuition Students

M. Henderson said she updated a brochure to send to the other Islands schools encouraging families with 7th and 8th graders to consider Folsom for school choice. The board looked at it. J. Pidgeon asked M. Henderson to check that she has parental permission to publish photos of the students in the brochure. The board suggested some small changes in wording.

M. Henderson said it costs \$25 to print 25 brochures at Staples. D. Cain suggested 50 be printed. D. Cain noted the South Hero Board will need to check in with the boards of the schools where it plans to distribute the brochure. T. Maxham suggested the South Hero Board formally visit the other towns' boards and mention the intention to recruit students. D. Cain said he has been speaking with a Grand Isle board member on this topic.

D. Van Nostrand noted the upcoming meetings as follows:

-North Hero: First Tuesday of the month

-Grand Isle: Second Thursday of the month

F. Approval of Bills for Payment.

B. Vaughan asked why the preschool bill invoices are different amounts. He would like more information. He said it should be the same amount per student, but it does not always appear to be the same amount on different invoices. **The superintendent said he would ask that more information be provided to the board. The bills were approved for payment on a voice vote.** B. Vaughan made a motion to pay the bills. T. Maxham seconded the motion

Executive Session (if needed pursuant to 1 V.S.A. sec. 313)

D. Cain move the board go into Executive Session to discuss a student matter. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote. The Board went into Executive Session at 7:40 p.m.

The board came out of Executive Session at 9:15 p.m.

D Cain moved the board instruct the Special Education Coordinator to sign a district agreement for behavior support services for the remainder of the year. B Vaughan seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote; RJ Sweeney abstaining.

Future Agenda Items & Next Meeting (Discussion)

The board's next meeting is 6 p.m. April 5 at Folsom School.

Future items: The Board will discuss what comes out of the GISU meeting. D. Cain said he would look back at the board's long-term plans. T. Maxham said it was asked at Town Meeting that the board look at the long-term needs of the building and talk with Steve Berard about what is needed. D. Cain also noted a question at Town Meeting on the food budget. He said the board would like to learn more about the food budget from the business manager.

Adjournment

The board adjourned at 9:17 p.m. on a voice vote. T. Maxham moved the board adjourn; B. Vaughan seconded the motion.
