

**Minutes Thursday, August 18, 2016 South Hero School Board Meeting
At Folsom Education & Community Center**

6:05 Meeting called to order by Kris Bowser, Board Chair

In Attendance: Kris Bowser, Dave Cain, RJ Sweeney, Bernie Toth, Bentley Vaughan, Board members; Lenny Badeau, Principal; Emily Bowser, Board Secretary; Lynn Carpenter, GISU Business Manager; Bill Banas, Kari Banas, Meg Wickenden, Farryl Bertmann, Mike Donoghue, Tim Maxham, Jessica McAllister, Jen Lyon-Horne, Melissa Hood, Rebekah Prouty, Kathy Robinson, Helen Prakelt Bishop, Fred Helsop, Melanie Henderson

Adjustment of Agenda: Public Comments will be moved above Board Action.

Superintendent's Report: Delayed until next meeting, Superintendent Burrington unavailable for presentation.

Principal's Report, presented by Lenny Badeau, Principal

Highlights:

- Enrollment up to 136
- Celebrations:
 - Jamie Berard welcomed as new art teacher
 - Ariana Middlemiss welcomed as new food service director
- Student/Family Information packets have been mailed out; should have been received today.
- Gym renovations coming along nicely
- PTO Breakfast to kick off new school year at 7:45a.m. on Wednesday August 31st.
- During school year the building will be opening at 7:35a.m. and upon arrival all students will go to the cafeteria, where breakfast will be made available, before the start of the instructional day at 7:55a.m.. Breakfast will be made available to students on the same payment system as lunch.

Board Discussion:

Update on Budget to Actuals, presented by Lynn Carpenter, GISU Business Manager

- 2016 - NOT audited, but ended on a surplus
- When audit report comes back, rollover from fiscal year 15 and beginning fund balance will be made available.
- Kris Bowser asked if there was anything that was coming up as a red flag for the Board to be cautious of going forward. Lynn did not see anything, felt that the budget had been managed very well.

Update From the August 10, 2016 Act 46 Committee Meeting, presented by Kris Bowser

- As meeting took place post-referendum vote, South Hero was asked what their status was going to be, elected to remain advisory to the Island Merger plan.

- South Hero asked if the other towns would consider delaying their merger vote until March, but Isle La Motte, Grand Isle and North Hero are excited about moving forward. They will not have as much impact to their budget without incentives as South Hero, and refused to move the vote. If South Hero were to elect to postpone its vote until March, even if it passed and they joined the other towns it would not be a preferred structure and so all incentives would be lost.
- Study packet has been sent to Agency of Education for approval and will be back for revision by the Sept 7 Act 46 Committee Meeting to send out to State board, which meets September 15. Final return will come back sometime in October, at which point the towns will know if the merger is approved and qualifies for all incentives.

Update From Act 46 K-8 Sub-Committee, created presented by Sub-Committee Chair Melanie Henderson

- Next meeting will be Monday (next)
- Have identified 49 unmerged PreK-8 Vermont schools, and is looking into them based upon tax rate, distance from South Hero, overall 7-8 proficiency, and foreign language offerings.
- Next Steps will be to research technology to facilitate remote meetings, and to introduce an "Adopt a Town" project to use interested members of the community to determine which towns maybe receptive to discussions with South Hero by watching LCATV videos, attend board meetings in person. Melanie is developing a questionnaire for volunteers to use to evaluate towns.
- Kris Bowser asked if the subcommittee had looked into the State's opinion on merging with distant towns in terms of sharing a superintendent and a supervisory union. Melanie replied that is an issue that they have not yet looked into.

Discuss the Formation of an Act 46 K-6 Sub-Committee, presented by RJ Sweeney

- Feels a subcommittee investigating the PreK-6 options is needed, and that it will allow the community to play a larger role while the Board can step back and focus on school business, especially as the school year start.
- RJ expressed that he had heard from community members who told him it was important to them that South Hero remain part of the island community, and had been under the impression that a "no" vote in the referendum would provide more time for research. Due to the fact that the vote was so close, RJ felt it was important that the other side of the issue was allowed to have a voice.
- Bentley Vaughan disagreed. He felt that the Board should pick a direction, and that everything from the Banas's survey, to the vote itself, was pointing in the direction of PreK-8. He was concerned that the Board was just "kicking the can down the road."
- RJ Sweeney responded that this subcommittee would continue to move forward while allowing all community members to have a voice, not just those in favor of PreK-8. This new subcommittee wouldn't impede the efforts of the PreK-8 subcommittee, and that currently that subcommittee has not been able to provide a viable PreK-8 option for the Board. The two subcommittees would be two separate entities working towards a common goal. Dave Cain expressed agreement with that sentiment, stating that it was

important that South Hero voters have all their options presented to them. Bentley Vaughan disagreed, stating that he felt that the Act 46 Committee is doing that work.

- RJ Sweeney replied that it's been expressed that Board involvement has overshadowed the discussion, and that he is making a push for equity; that it was only fair for the PreK-6 supporters to have the same voice that the PreK-8 supporters did.

Public Comments:

- Tim Maxham spoke to point out that South Hero will lose all incentives if it doesn't merge with the other Island towns, and that looking into any other merger will cost South Hero as we would not have access to the \$25,000 grant that was used to develop the Act 46 Committee for the islands.
- Kari Banas said that it was her understanding that according to Clause 16, South Hero would still be eligible for incentives as long as we merged by July 2017. Kris Bowser and David Cain said that was incorrect: per state, ALL incentives and grant money will be gone.
- Bill Banas said that it was his understanding that incentives were being phased out so the preoccupation with them was a nonstarter. Kris Bowser replied that if South Hero merged into a preferred structure we would get those in perpetuity.
- Dave Cain asked Melanie Henderson to look into a potential merger with Georgia to ensure that it would be a preferred structure.
- Kari Banas asked whether the vote failed, if the Island towns would rally and create an on-island middle school. Tim Maxham pointed out that there was no point in speculating because that committee will still be together after the vote, and so it would have to wait until November. Board members agreed that they could not speculate.
- Fred Heslop spoke in approval of the PreK-6 Subcommittee, asked about the scope. RJ Sweeney replied that he hoped the new subcommittee would be a great resource for fact-checking. They will have the same charter as the PreK-8 subcommittee, but where they opt to go with it will be up to the members of that committee.
- Melissa Hood also spoke up in approval of the PreK-6 subcommittee. Felt it would provide people with a big-picture view of what a PreK-6 structure would look like.
- Tim Maxham pointed out that the "ship is sailing" and strongly felt that information going out is fine, but that if the vote was going to happen in November the Board needed to be aware of the process of getting it on the Ballot. Kris Bowser said she had spoken with Sharon Roy and gotten a schedule from her.
- Farryl Bertmann spoke up in favor of the PreK-6 subcommittee. She also pointed out that November will be a big election and felt that Act 46 could get repealed as it is a big election and felt Montpelier will notice the amount of discontent with the law..
- Melanie Henderson spoke up to thank Dave Cain for asking the Act 46 Committee to delay vote until March.
- Fred Heslop asked if it would be appropriate to encourage communication between the two committees. RJ Sweeney said it would be fantastic; Melanie Henderson would be in favor.

Board Action:

- Bernie Toth made motion to pay bills, RJ Sweeney seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- RJ Sweeney made motion to approve minutes for July 14,2016 and July 29,2016, Bernie Toth seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- RJ Sweeney made motion to establish a K-6 subcommittee to further explore the PreK-6 options, made up of community members and one Board member. Bernie Toth seconded. Motion perceived to pass unanimously, as stated by Chair Kris Bowser. After meeting was adjourned, Bentley Vaughan indicated to Board Secretary Emily Bowser that he had abstained on this vote.
- RJ Sweeney made a motion to approve and sign two contracts, one for the new art teacher Jamie Berard, and the new food service manager Ariana Middlemiss. Bernie seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- Bernie Toth made motion to adjourn at 7:24p.m., Bentley Vaughan seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:24p.m.

Executive Session: none

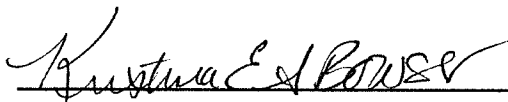
Board Correspondence/Sharing:

- A company doing solar for schools, decision will have to be made quickly. Kris Bowser asked for Board authorization to speak to this company.
 - Lenny to ask DC energy about the current solar panels.

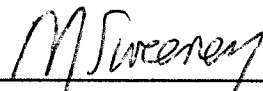
Follow-up/Old Business: none

Meeting officially adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Next meeting will be September 1st at 6:00p.m. Folsom Education and Community Center




 Kristina Bowser

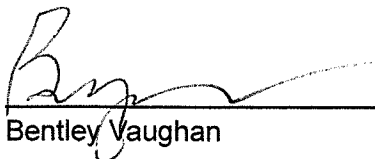


 RJ Sweeney

 Dave Cain



 Bernadette Toth



 Bentley Vaughan