

# South Hero School Board

Meeting **Thursday, Sept. 7, 2017** at Folsom Education & Community Center

~~DRAFT MINUTES~~ TEM.

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

In attendance: Board members David Cain, Melanie Henderson, Tim Maxham, RJ Sweeney, and Bentley Vaughn. Staff members principal Susan McKelvie, superintendent Don Van Nostrand, and Julie Pidgeon. Audience: Jim Jones (LCATV), Bill and Kari Banas, Peter and Sandy Gregg.

## Adjustment of Agenda

-A personnel matter requiring executive session was added.

-Andy Julow of the Islands Unified School District was not able to attend the Act 46 discussion

## Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the Aug 3, 2017, meeting were approved on a voice vote. RJ Sweeney made a motion to approve the minutes. T. Maxham seconded it. Action on the Aug. 11 minutes was tabled pending a copy of the minutes.

## Public Comments

The board opened for public comment. The audience did not have any comment. T. Maxham expressed appreciation to D. Cain and his family for providing the site for the board retreat in August.

## Superintendent Don Van Nostrand's Report

Superintendent Van Nostrand shared that his written report would be distributed to all board members in the Supervisory Union at the same time.

He acknowledged Megan Grube, director of curriculum and technology, for her work putting together inservice, as well as S. McKelvie and the other principals for a successful opening to school.

He noted the enrollment numbers in the report were incomplete. The district is converting to a new student information system and the enrollment data was not fully entered into the system when the numbers were obtained for the report to the board.

On Monday, Sept. 11, the Vermont School Boards Association will hold its regional meeting. South Hero board members are not registered to attend. If board members want to attend, D. Van Nostrand will register them and encouraged attendance. He will bring back information to the board from the meeting.

There will be changes in Smarter Balanced statewide assessment as follows: a) The state is field testing a new science assessment that will replace the NECAP exam in science that was given for the last time in 2017. B) The state is updating the alternate assessment system (1% of the population in Vermont is allowed to take an alternate assessment if a disability prevents taking a grade-level assessment). C) The window for the Smarter Balanced (SBAC) exam is March to June.

D. Van Nostrand mentioned Secretary of Education Holcombe's memo about the events in Charlottesville. Teachers reviewed the hazing/harassment/bullying policy at inservice. The district's goal is an atmosphere that is safe for all students.

## Questions:

M. Henderson asked a question about a point of distribution memo of understanding. T. Maxham requested a breakdown of where high school students throughout the county are attending school.

## Principal Susan McKelvie's Report

S. McKelvie noted a positive opening to the school year. She held a two-day retreat in the middle of August with most staff. The purpose was to set goals and revamp PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support) expectations. A new PBIS behavior matrix will be shared with parents at Open House on Sept. 13.

She noted her follow-through on plans to ramp up communication. She is aiming more timely communication. Folsom is now providing a weekly newsletter to families. She noted the website is not updated because she is having technical troubles. She is working with Chris Luce from the GISU to resolve the problem. The Facebook page is updated.

Enrollment is approximately 135 students. Some students are still in transition, which is why the number is not final.

The school has two new hires: special educator Silas Saxer and temporary kitchen aide Nancy Keith. S. McKelvie also clarified the communication specialist position mentioned on the opening day of school as a special education paraprofessional position.

D. Cain noted the ice cream social, baseball game and breakfast were great events and offered kudos to the PTO and to S. McKelvie.

S. McKelvie noted that all contracted work for the kitchen was completed in response to a question from T. Maxham.

## Board Discussion

A) Budget to actuals: Board members discussed the report. The encumbrances are not reflected in the numbers. D. Van Nostrand noted the Health Care Recapture memo that relates to the Vermont Legislature's conflict with the governor over health care in the last session. As a result, towns are required to capture savings from changes in teacher health insurance. The amount of "recapture" money (the amount of aid the state will reduce in what it sends to South Hero) will be \$20,037 this year and \$10,789 next year. (The state requires 65% this year and 35% next year). South Hero will need to reduce its budget by \$20,000 this year to meet this requirement.

D. Cain noted that the board, to his memory, budgeted for health insurance using numbers from the old system, which would have resulted in budgeting a higher amount for health care than needed under the new system. He indicated hope that South Hero will not be as challenged to meet the requirement. D. Van Nostrand will gather a more detailed picture for the board on the budgetary impact.

D. Cain noted that the line for the principal's salary (Page 7, Line 140) stands out because it includes the amount the board paid the former principal. He noted the board will be over-budget on that line item and cautioned members to watch the budget and be careful with spending.

S. Gregg asked the board to clarify if the amount paid to the former principal will fall under the same line as the current principal. D. Cain clarified that was the case. S. Gregg recommended a notes section in the town report to clarify the spending. She also asked for an actual amount. D. Cain indicated he thought the board would handle it that way.

T. Maxham pointed out there will also be an amount in the health care insurance line item related to severance with former principal.

B) Act 46 compliance discussion: D. Cain said Andy Julow, Champlain Islands Unified School District Chair, could not attend the meeting. He reported that the Islands Unified School District is getting paperwork ready to send to state related to its merger. Alburgh board members attended a recent meeting, and former superintendent Barbara Burrington submitted a proposal for a 3:1 merger with Alburgh joining with the Champlain Islands Unified School District in a 3:1 merger allowed by new legislation in the last legislative session. Alburgh will vote Nov. 7, if the state accepts the proposal.

M. Henderson reported that South Hero's Act 46 report is 60 percent completed. She is still working on it, and noted that a lot of data required by the state is not provided by the state. She has requested information from D. Van Nostrand and S. McKelvie to fill in the gaps in data. The report is in good shape. M. Henderson suggested the board consider sub-

contracting with B. Burrington to proof-read the report and provide feedback. M. Henderson will send a copy of the draft-in-progress to board members.

C) Athletics coach compensation: Andrew Riegler, PE teacher and Athletic Director, has requested the board consider budgeting more money to compensate coaches. S. McKelvie introduced the issue and said A. Riegler reports difficulty finding coaches because of current remuneration, which is lower than surrounding districts. He is asking the board to consider raising coach's salaries. D. Cain read an email from A. Riegler that noted current payment is \$500 for soccer and \$650 for basketball. A. Riegler compared the payment to Burlington and suggested South Hero consider raising the payment to coaches to \$1,000 per coach. D. Cain requested data on what other Island towns pay.

P. Gregg asked if there had been outreach to the community. S. McKelvie replied that coaches are hired for this year, but she would inquire how the positions are advertised.

#### D) Board calendar discussion

The board came up with a list of items to discuss during the year at its retreat. The list is as follows:

October: Discuss the key security policy; receive education on how the food service budget works; begin looking at the budget

November: Work on the budget; discuss how to attract middle schoolers from rest of Islands; examine busing in the district in terms of efficiency.

December: Work on the budget

January: Finish work on the budget; conduct a new climate survey (T. Maxham noted he was not interested in spending money on a climate survey again so soon if things are looking up. He also asked when the results would be released to the public, and D. Cain said he is planning another meeting in the month to finish reviewing the climate survey. The survey is ready for distribution.

February: Prepare for Town Meeting; create a leadership consistency plan on how to retain administration and board members.

March: Town Meeting; review last year's audit to make sure the board has responded to all recommendations.

April: Budgeting education and learning more about budgeting process.

May: Long-term spending outlook for facilities and books.

Summer: Hold another retreat; conduct an asset inventory.

#### E) Discussion of Policy Code C3 – Public participation at board meetings

D. Van Nostrand led the discussion. Policies were distributed. The policy is to encourage the public to participate at meetings. The policy allows the board to put some rules on participation to keep it orderly and timely. D. Van Nostrand reviewed who may address the board and when. He encouraged the board to have a plan in advance to manage a large number of people who wish to speak. What is the procedure the board will take so the public can have a voice? He noted all public presentations and comments must comply with board policy on complaints (D10) and would be out of order if they breach privacy. T. Maxham said all board members should speak up if they recognize a speaker is out of order. He also noted topics not on the agenda can be taken under advisement and discussed at a future meeting. D. Van Nostrand explained how a speaker's list could work in the event a meeting or public forum drew a large crowd.

D. Cain said the board would not modify Code C3 but should come up with operating procedures. D. Van Nostrand supported that approach and noted that changing the board's policies would be difficult.

B. Banas shared a reservation about using a procedure instead of changing a policy. If the procedure changes from meeting to meeting, then the public doesn't know what to expect. RJ Sweeney encouraged communication. D. Cain

acknowledged B. Banas' concerns and favored making a procedure for public involvement in meetings with a large audience.

#### -Discussion of Policy Code D10 – Public complaints about personnel

D. Van Nostrand reviewed the policy. It outlines how complaints about personnel should be handled. D. Van Nostrand noted that as superintendent, he wants to know if a principal followed the policies and procedures correctly. T. Maxham noted the board needs to observe confidentiality in personnel matters. A person may appeal to the board after exhausting the chain of command by requesting a session of the board for the purpose of reviewing the superintendent's decision. S. Gregg noted an interpretation of language in the policy makes it less definitive.

D. Cain asked D. Van Nostrand to draft a procedure for how the board will handle public comment in meetings with a large audience (C3). D. Cain and RJ Sweeney indicated they favor a procedure.

K. Banas asked the board to consider the timing of public comment, noting that if comments are limited to the beginning of a meeting, people might miss the opportunity to speak in reaction to board action.

T. Maxham said his interpretation of C3 is that the board needs to take public comments before action is taken and that comment period is in addition to public comments to bring up an item that is not on the agenda.

#### Board Action

A) Approval of bills for payment: B. Vaughn recommended not paying Cambridge Solar per the recommendation of the legal counsel because the bill does not note the amount South Hero was supposed to be reimbursed for previously discussed problems with a contract. B. Vaughn is still looking for the account to be corrected.

B. Vaughn moved, and RJ Sweeney seconded a motion to pay the bills minus \$6,361.20 to Cambridge Solar LLC and \$841.50 to law firm Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramer. Approved.

C. Contracts for signature: RJ Sweeney moved and T. Maxham seconded signing a contract for Rosann Martin, a communications specialist, 1 FTE. Approved.

M. Henderson moved and B. Vaughn seconded signing a pre-kindergarten partnership agreement with Burlington Forest Pre-School L3C. Approved.

RJ Sweeney moved and B. Vaughn seconded a motion to sign a pre-kindergarten partnership agreement with the Champlain Islands Parent Child Center. Approved.

D. Middle-Level overnight trip: S. McKelvie asked the board's approval for a middle school overnight camping trip to Eagle Camp in South Hero. She noted the staff had met the requirements for the trip. M. Henderson moved and T. Maxham seconded a motion to approve the trip. Approved.

Students will be invited to make a presentation on the trip to the board at its next meeting on Sept. 21 per policy G3R.

#### Board Correspondence / Sharing

There was no correspondence or sharing.

#### Follow-Up / Old Business

There was no old business. It was clarified that the agenda should be posted 48 hours prior to the meeting in 3 designated places (town hall, the post office and the school). Minutes need to be made available to the public and posted on the website within 5 days of a meeting. T. Maxham asked that minutes be provided to him in paper copy in his box in school. J. Pidgeon will put a paper copy in all board members' boxes in addition to emailing a copy to those who wish to receive it electronically. J. Pidgeon will also post the minutes on the bulletin board in the school for public inspection.

Executive Session

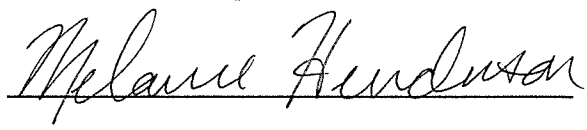
RJ Sweeney moved and T. Maxham seconded the board go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

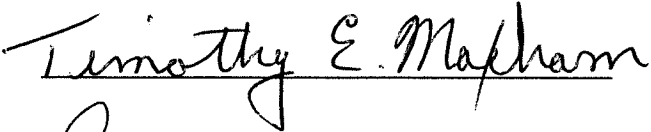
Approved.

Adjourn

The board adjourned at 8:03 p.m. with a motion from B. Vaughn seconded by T. Maxham. The board's next meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. Sept. 21, at Folsom School.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_