

**MONT VERNON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 17, 2008
MONT VERNON VILLAGE SCHOOL**

Leo White called the board meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present:

ATTENDANCE

Mont Vernon School Board: Howard Brown, Jayson Darula (arrived at 6:22 p.m.), Bruce Schmidt, John Schwope and Leo White

Administrative team: Lisa Ambrosio, Bruce Chakrin, Nicole Heimark, Dr. Mary Jennings, Betty Shankel and Kathy Skoglund

Budget Committee: Kim Roberge and John Quinlan (Selectmen)

Minutes Taker: Lyn Jennings

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. **Principal's Report**: – Board members received a copy of the Principals Report for 1/17/08.

Leo White asked Meredith with the resignation of the Math Coach, would they be advertising to fill the vacancy. Meredith said she planned on posting the vacancy. Meredith said the position must be posted each year, since the position is funded through a grant. She said next year would be the third year of the grant for the Math Coach.

Leo White asked for comments from the public but none were forthcoming.

III. PUBLIC TIME

A motion was made by Howard Brown and seconded by John Schwope to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. A. Minutes December 18, 2007; B. Budget 1. Treasurer's Report 2. Manifest 3. Transfers and C. Donations to Student Activity Fund. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. **FY09 Budget**

V. PRESENTATIONS

FINAL Minutes of January 17, 2008 Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

1. 2nd Draft – Board members received a copy of the Mont Vernon School District FY09 Budget Summary, which was dated 12/20/07. As proposed, the FY09 Proposed Budget was \$4,647,815 as compared to an FY08 Adopted Budget of \$4,429,970 representing a dollar increase of \$217,845 and a 4.92% increase.

Board members also received in their board packets a copy of the Mont Vernon Village School FY08-09 Preliminary Budget detail dated 12/20/07.

Accompanying the budget was the narrative for the proposed budget, which was prepared by the Principal, Meredith Nadeau.

Board members also received a handout in their board packets entitled Budget Line Items (detail) for Special Education Accounts for the proposed 2008-2009 Budget.

John Schwope said the overall budget increase is too high and they need to figure out how to bring it down. John said he is not comfortable with the 4.92% increase as shown.

John suggested looking at what they could not change – for example Special Education, oil, etcetera, then see what costs they can affect and discuss those line items.

Board members began discussing the proposed FY09 Budget by questioning the line items that were impacting the budget the greatest, then, they reviewed the budget by line item detail.

Selectmen John Quilan said he met with Jayson Darula and Peter King last week and they looked at the tax increase per \$1,000 and something has to give.

John said the town looked at the paving figure and thought it was very high. John said the district should have at least three quotes prior to proceeding with the paving project. John said he thought the laptop cart

should go and he requested the budget committee get a breakdown of personnel in the school.

John said because Mont Vernon is such a small town, it may not be possible to emulate Amherst.

Jayson Darula said the Budget Committee also discussed the budget increases in the following areas:

Technology Instructor – Increase from half to full time.

Automation of Library

Laptop Cart – Jayson said although this is a very desirable addition, the budget committee wants to know what is the utilization of the computer lab right now and will the lab go away and will technology (computer time) be incorporated into the classroom rather than through a computer lab.

Kim Roberge said the budget is up \$1,300,000.00 in four years. Kim asked if the administration believes the budget as presented is a fiscally conservative budget that will pass.

Dr. Jennings said the administration believes they have brought forward a budget as tight as possible and at the same time it includes improvements for students.

Dr. Jennings said the budget is \$98,000 more than last year when you deduct the Special Education increases of \$200,000.

Dr. Jennings said last year Mont Vernon received a big increase in state aid and this year they are projecting they will receive exactly what they received last year.

Kathy Skoglund said the biggest increases in Special Education are in Transportation – cost per mile and in Services to Students In District. Kathy said these students are coming from Preschool and into the Mont Vernon Village School.

Kathy said the increases in Special Education are all based on specific kids. Kathy said the only materials and supplies, which are discretionary expenses total about \$2,000.

John Quinlan said he had the Mont Vernon Road Agent review the paving estimate. John said you should never get only one estimate, they should get at least two more estimates. John said the Road Agent believes the cost of the project could be about 2/3 of what the original estimate is. John said to pave the rear of the building; it should be approximately \$15,000. To pave the front and back, it should cost approximately \$31,000 not \$46,800.

John said the Road Agent believes at least the front needs to be paved this year.

A motion was made by Jayson Darula and seconded by Bruce Schmidt to amend line 168, Remodeling Building and Grounds to decrease it from an increase of \$50,300 to an increase of \$31,000. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

Next, board members discussed the line items with the largest increases.

Board members received a handout in their board packets entitled Mont Vernon Technology Budget – Proposed 08-09 (12/11/07).

The 2009 Proposed Technology Budget is \$86,363 as compared to the adopted Technology Budget of 2008 totaling \$38,205. The proposed \$86,363 technology budget for 2009 does not include the salary increase of the Technology Specialist should the position go from half time to full time.

Board members asked what the cost would be to increase the position from half time to full time. Lisa Ambrosio and Betty Shankel said it would be \$36,670. They said this figure includes salary and benefits.

Bruce Chakrin presented some slides on why the Technology Position should be increased from part time (half-time) to full time.

Bruce said the position should be increased to full time because they are increasing the load of using the

technology specialist. Bruce and Meredith said he is needed much more than when he is currently at the Village School.

Bruce said they are facing new State Standards (ICT – Information & Communication Technology) Standards.

Bruce said they want to be able to reach all kids with the same set of standards.

Bruce said there are new Grade Span Instruction Expectations which include:

- New ICT Literacy Standards
- Technology Integration
- Internet Safety
- Digital Portfolio – develop plans and processes so students will have record of progress/growth (reflections)
- Digital Equity for all students
- Angel Course Management – has been added during the past couple of years.
- Digital Portfolio

Bruce highlighted some of the New Teaching Technologies:

- Smartboard, video and multimedia projects
- Web 2.0 (read/write web)
- In Service JIT Training and Support
- Additional Real Time Teacher Support
 - NWEA Testing and analysis
 - Performance Tracker

Bruce explained there is still a need for additional technology.

Some of the proposed technology includes:

- More computers to install and support
- Global Connect Phone notification
- Web service expansion & management
- Case E tech support (Special Education)
- Expanded i4See data requirements (State)
- Wireless installation

Meredith said in the past, they had a full time Library/Technology Specialist. Meredith said the technology they are currently using is much more sophisticated than ever before and they are using it on a daily basis all the time.

Meredith said there is constantly an availability issue with having only a part time Technology Specialist. Meredith said the Technology Specialist not only provides instructional support to students and staff but technical support.

John Schwope said they cannot afford to look at technology as a nicety, because whether they like it or not, it really is going to be the foundation for what is going on in the school. John said if they don't support increasing the time of the Technology Specialist, they are wasting their money on all the other things that involve technology.

John said prior to seeing the justification for increasing the time of the Technology Specialist he thought it would be an easy place to cut for him, but since he heard the presentation John said if they don't increase the support for technology, then they will be sliding backwards.

Board members reviewed the handout provided by Bruce Chakrin regarding the Mont Vernon Technology Budget. Many questions arose regarding different proposed line items within the Technology Budget.

Bruce Schmidt asked how many computers they currently have in the computer lab. Meredith said they have 26 computers in the lab. Meredith said they currently they have an inventory of 65 computers.

Discussion followed regarding the proposed purchase price for the laptops that would be utilized on the laptop cart.

Board members asked if they had a laptop cart would the need for a computer lab eventually go away. Bruce Chakrin said he does not believe the need for the

computer lab would go away.

Jayson Darula asked about the current utilization of the computer lab. Meredith provided board members with a handout, which detailed the MVVS Technology Lab Schedule. The schedule was dated December 2007. Meredith explained this schedule only included pre-requested time in the computer lab. Meredith told board members the computer lab is in constant use.

Board members were also given a handout, which detailed Technology Integration Examples in Guidance, Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies.

Also provided was an article about how technology is used at the Elementary level, entitled *Integrating Technology in the Primary Grades*.

Kim Roberge asked if they are currently teaching a computer class at the Village School, as done in previous years. Meredith said no, they are not currently teaching a computer class; they are integrating computers into the classroom, which is considered a current best practice. Meredith said by utilizing this process, the computer becomes a tool, and they learn in their classroom with computers.

Bruce Schmidt said he was comfortable with the Technology Budget as presented.

Jayson Darula said he is all for the Technology Budget however he believes it would be a difficult sell and would like to see a lower number that would be sellable to the town.

Howard Brown said technology is the way to go and said he is okay with the technology budget as proposed.

John Schwope said he is not comfortable with the technology budget at its proposed amount of \$86,363.

John said he would like to see the purchase price of the laptops be reduced for the laptop cart.

A motion was made by John Schwope to reduce the

technology budget by \$15,000. Jayson Darula seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

Board members discussed the proposal to implement Library Automation at a cost of \$14,158, which appeared in line 83 (Information / Technology Specialist) at a cost of \$2,000 and line 89 (New Equipment) at a cost of \$11,658 in the proposed budget.

Bruce Chakrin presented Library Automation – Why Now?

- Bring MVVS Library into the 21st century.

Bruce said all neighboring towns are automated, and card catalogs are inefficient and antiquated.

- Automation saves time.

Often time's students have a limited amount of time in the library. Bruce said if students want to know if they have any books already checked out, it is very time consuming for the Librarian to determine.

- Increase student performance on achievement tests.

Bruce said research indicates higher achievement in schools with well-equipped information centers. Students are able to easily access information, which leads to more time for thought and writing.

- Sharing resources saves money.

Bruce said the Village School would have access to other SAU school libraries to share materials.

- More efficient use of student, teacher, and librarian time.
- Discount based on last years implementation at SHS, AMS and Amherst implementation.

- Share training cost with Amherst.

Bruce presented the Benefits of Library Automation:

- Interact more with students
 - Suggestions for pleasure reading; create or update reading lists; plan and conduct literacy based events.
- Collaborate with Teachers
 - Provide reading/A-V lists based on teacher's lesson plans
 - Suggest interdisciplinary activities for student learner needs.
- Collection Development
- Current Events
- Apprise and post notice of current events related to current studies.
- Circulation
 - Check out records reviewed instantly
 - Overdue notices generated by system
- Cataloging
 - More time deciding on subject area materials and less time generating pockets and cards.
- Easily generate relevant content for the Library Web Page.
- Accessible from home

Board members were given the opportunity to ask questions regarding Bruce Chakrin's presentation.

Howard Brown asked how many computers would be dedicated for this system. Bruce said two.

Board members asked about library automation in neighboring towns and Bruce Chakrin said the Wilton School District automated their libraries four years ago. Bruce said he along with Meredith researched Library Automation throughout Southern New Hampshire, and could find no one else still operating the way the Village School is operating on the card system.

Bruce Schmidt said the Village School has a small library and he doesn't think the money is going to the right place, he would rather see more books purchased.

Meredith Nadeau said by automating the library, a good benefit is Inter Library loan throughout the SAU District.

John Schwope asked why this project was being proposed now and Bruce said because it is going on in other places in the district, which would save the Village School money.

A motion was made by Jayson Darula to reduce line item 83 (Information / Technology Specialist) by \$2,000 and line 89 (New Equipment) by 11,658. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 3-1.

Board members reviewed line items they decreased or removed from the budget.

Line 168 Remodeling Building and Grounds – reduced from \$50,300 to \$31,000.

Technology budget – reduced by \$15,000.

Lines 83 and 89, Library Automation removed from proposed budget. Total removed \$13,658

Savings as voted on above totaled \$47,958.

A motion was made by Jayson Darula to reduce line 168 to zero and to add a warrant article to take the cost of paving the parking lot out of the year-end surplus in the amount of \$31,000. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

Board members reduced the budget by \$78,958, making the overall proposed budget increase for 2008-2009 3.83%.

Bruce Schmidt asked Betty if they could pay down the principal of a bond if there is a surplus at the end of the year. Betty said she was not sure, and would have to look at the terms of the bond.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to bring forward the Budget and Warrant Articles as amended to the Public Hearing. Jayson Darula seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

2. **Proposed Warrants** – Board members received a copy of the Mont Vernon School District Draft Annual Meeting FY09 Warrant State of New Hampshire.

Board members reviewed the proposed warrant articles.

Board members agreed to put the Paving Warrant Article immediately after the Budget Article, making it Article 3.

Bruce Schmidt suggested making the current Article 3 \$9,000 so the School Property Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund would have a balance of \$30,000 in it.

Board members agreed to remove proposed Articles 4 and 5.

- B. **Social Studies Curriculum** – Kim Tighe presented an update on the Social Studies Curriculum.

Kim said they ordered new materials for grades 2-5, the Harcourt Series. Kim said the materials have been well received by everyone and they are finally getting some consistency throughout the building, which they desperately needed. Kim thanked the board for their support in getting these new teaching/student materials.

Kim said the Harcourt series offers an online version so children are able to do work at home if they need too.

Kim said she and the staff are enjoying the mini lessons that go along with each of the core lessons.

Kim said the 6th grade is using the Holt series and they are very happy with it. Kim said it is a nice compliment to the program and it has been an easy transition.

Kim said curriculum revisions have been finished; they are just waiting for them to be finalized. Kim said the staff has seen the drafts.

Kim presented some of the Next Steps:

- Create sample lessons
- Once the curriculum has been adopted by the SAU, they will distribute hard copies of the curriculum to the teachers.

Leo White asked Kim if they had laptops in the classroom, would they be able to integrate the use of the laptops with this curriculum. Kim said yes, many teachers would take advantage of using the laptops for teaching their lessons.

Leo White thanked Kim Tighe for coming in and providing an update on the Social Studies curriculum.

- C. **Quarterly Financial Report** – Board members received a handout entitled Mont Vernon School District Quarterly Financial Report Fiscal Year 2007-2008, 7/1/2007 – 12/31/2007.

Betty told board members the Local Revenue is high because Interest Income is higher than expected.

Betty said State and Federal Revenues are as expected.

Betty said they are projecting an overage in Title I Tutors because the funding from the General Fund was not required; it was funded through a grant. This represents a savings of \$10,700. Also, the Tuition to the Middle School is less than anticipated because enrollment was lower than expected, 72 versus 66.

Betty said they are anticipating an overage in Special Education Tuition – Middle – due to an OOD placement that was not required. (an estimated savings of \$40,000)

Betty said they are anticipating an overage in Health Insurance of approximately \$20,000 due to rates lower

than expected.

A. **Policies – 2nd Reading** –

VI. ACTION ITEMS

School Community Relations Policies –

KA – School, Community and Home Relations

Student Policies

JH – Student Absences and Excuses

JI – Student Rights and Responsibilities

JLDBA – Behavior Management and Intervention

A motion was made by Howard Brown and seconded by John Schwope to adopt Policies KA, JH, JI, and JLDBA as presented. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

B. **School Board Representation on the Search**

Committee – Dr. Jennings told board members they are looking for a representative from Mont Vernon to sit on the search committee for a Special Education Director. Dr. Jennings explained each board could send one representative from their respective board to sit on the committee.

John Schwope asked what the required time commitment would be for sitting on this committee.

Dr. Jennings said the time commitment to sit on the search committee would be approximately ten hours and it would also involve approximately 2½ days of interviews.

Dr. Jennings said each committee member would need to be available during the month of February. Dr. Jennings said the committee hoped to make a formal recommendation to the SAU Board in March.

Board members were told if they were interested in sitting on this committee to contact either Leo White or Dr. Jennings via e-mail.

A. Policies – 1st Reading

VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Student Policy

JLCF – Wellness – Board members discussed the policy that was provided in their board packets.

Bruce Schmidt said he had the same concerns he had when the policy was presented at the SAU Board meeting.

Bruce said he doesn't believe it is realistic for Mont Vernon to be able to implement a breakfast program within the next three years. Bruce said he didn't think it was right to include a goal they don't plan on implementing.

Dr. Jennings said having a breakfast program is a good idea and the district recommends having one. Dr. Jennings said the administration has been discussing with Meredith and Franceen Lupa the possibility of implementing a breakfast program at the Village School.

Dr. Jennings told board members Franceen is putting together a survey that will be sent to parents to see if there is any interest in offering some sort of snack or breakfast for students. Dr. Jennings said they could offer the snack/breakfast items via a cart shortly after the student's arrival to school.

Howard Brown said they left the Breakfast and Lunch clause in the policy because one of the RSA's recommends they provide a breakfast.

Bruce Schmidt said he is happy with what he is hearing and action is actually taking place and he is okay with leaving the policy the way it is currently written.

Under Section E. Food Sales, Dr. Jennings suggested under the section titled Middle/Junior High and High Schools; they remove the words "through programs for student after the school day."

Board members agreed with this suggestion and the

policy will be amended.

Next month the board will have a second reading on Policy JLCF.

Bruce Schmidt told board members he received an e-mail from Laura regarding upcoming PTA events. Bruce said Laura is interested in doing a presentation to the board on the Enrichment Program. Board members agreed the presentation would be after the budget process is complete.

Bruce said the PTA is planning a canned goods drive in February as well as another Movie Night. Meredith said the Movie Night is scheduled for February 15, 2008.

A motion was made by John Schwope to adjourn the meeting. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0) The meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

VIII. OTHER

IX. REVIEW OF MEETING/ADJOURN