

**MONT VERNON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 18, 2007
MONT VERNON VILLAGE SCHOOL**

Leo White called the board meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present:

ATTENDANCE

Mont Vernon School Board: Howard Brown, Jayson Darula, Bruce Schmidt, John Schwope and Leo White

Administrative team: Nicole Heimarck, Dr. Mary Jennings, Jim Miner, Betty Shankel Kathy Skoglund and Renee Sparks

Budget Committee: Peter King, Kim Roberge, and John Quinlan (Selectmen)

Minutes Taker: Lyn Jennings

Dr. Jennings told board members the Souhegan School Board wants to have another meeting before their Deliberative Session so they would have to meet on January 10, 2008, the regularly scheduled board meeting for Mont Vernon. Dr. Jennings asked if the board would be willing to move their meeting to January 17, 2007. Board members agreed to hold their next board meeting on January 17, 2008.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Jennings told board members Meredith Nadeau was unable to make the board meeting this evening due to a family emergency. Dr. Jennings said the administration still planned on presenting the 1st Draft of the FY09 Budget, and were prepared to do so, even with the absence of Meredith. Dr. Jennings said if the administration was unable to answer any of the board's questions in Meredith's absence, they would get the necessary information to the board as soon as possible.

- A. **Principal's Report**: – Board members received a copy of the Principals Report for 12/18/07.

There were no questions by board members.

Leo White asked for comments from the public but none

III. PUBLIC TIME

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were forthcoming.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Howard Brown to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. A. Minutes November 8, 2007; B. Budget 1. Treasurer's Report 2. Manifest and C. Donation to Student Activity Fund. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

- A. Auditor's Report FY07 – Cheryl from Melanson Heath thanked the Mont Vernon School District for having them as their auditors again this year.

Board members received copies of the Mont Vernon School District Annual Financial Statements for the Year Ended June 30, 2007.

Cheryl told board members on page 9 of the Financial Statements, the Total Net Assets (Equity) as of June 30, 2007, is \$1,319,990.

Cheryl told board members to refer to page 10 of the Financial Statements where the Change in Net Assets was \$331,514, which is really the Net Income for the Year.

Cheryl explained the Statement of Revenues and Other Sources, and Expenditures and Other Uses – Budget and Actual on page 15. Cheryl said the district received more than budgeted for Revenues and Other Sources in the amount of \$172,890. The district under spent in Total Expenditures and Other Uses by \$257,062. The Excess of Revenues and other sources over expenditures and other uses saw a Budget Variance of \$429,952.

Board members received a copy of the Management Letter for the Year Ended June 30, 2007.

The Management Letter provided two Current Year Recommendations.

1. Improve Controls over Disbursements

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IV. CONSENT AGENDA

V. PRESENTATIONS

2. Consider Implementing Internal Control Improvements.

The letter also provided the Status of the Prior Year Recommendation to Improve Student Activity Fund Policies and Procedures.

Cheryl thanked everyone at the Business Office for their assistance. She said they were easy to work with and enjoyed working with them.

Leo White asked Cheryl if the auditors follow up during the year on their current year recommendations or at the next audit. Cheryl said they follow up at the next audit.

Lisa Ambrosio said the administration would provide their response to the Current Year Recommendations to the board at the next board meeting.

Leo White thanked Cheryl for her presentation.

B. FY09 Budget

1. **1st Draft** – Nicole presented the Mont Vernon Village School Budget Presentation dated December 13, 2007, for the Fiscal Year 2009. Nicole explained she would present this information on behalf of Meredith Nadeau due to her unexpected absence.

Nicole presented an Overview of the Current Budget:

- Adequately supports the needs of the students with a focus on appropriate instructional materials in all areas and curriculum revision.
- Adequately supports educational goals by addressing ongoing commitments to literacy, mathematics, social studies, science and integrated arts.
- Supports technology plan and replacement cycle.
- Adequately supports special education needs.
- Provides safe environment.

- Includes addition of part-time literacy coach, increases in guidance, PE, and nursing staff, and increases for MVEA agreement.

Nicole provided the Current Enrollment at the Village School as well as Projections for 2009.

- Current Enrollment of 255 at the Village School and 66 at the Amherst Middle School.
- Projected Enrollment of 260 at Village School and 69 at the Amherst Middle School. (2.4% increase over last year)

Nicole presented the Class Sizes for FY09 based on the Projections. Nicole said the administration is not asking for any additional staff for FY09.

- K - 2 classes of 15
- G1 - 1 class of 15, 1 class of 16
- G2 - 2 classes of 17
- G3 - 2 classes of 24
- G4 - 1 class of 20, 1 class of 19
- G5 - 2 classes of 26
- G6 - 1 class of 26

Nicole presented the FY09 Educational Programming with their projected financial impact:

- Ongoing commitment to early literacy intervention, with continued support of literacy coach/teacher, the addition of a pilot reading program, targeted professional development, and absorption of Title 1 summer program costs. \$7,600
- Increased costs for participation in summer K-12 curriculum revision as well as moving the remaining curriculum coordinator salaries into the operating budget. \$3,700
- Student Activities: Year 2 of 3 to offset cost of band program instructor \$1,500
- Increase in time for technology integration specialist (.5)

- Technology expenditures include purchase of laptop cart, addition of a video montage system, library automation, and address replacement of equipment on 5-year cycle as well as upgrades to infrastructure. \$93,000

Nicole presented some of the other highlights to the FY09 proposed budget:

- Special Education Costs –
Overall increase of 13.5%
Addition of 1 instructional assistant to meet IEP requirements.
Increased preschool expenses \$104,000
- Repairs and Maintenance-
Paving of the bus loop and parking lot
\$46,800

Nicole presented some Additional Considerations:

- SAU Budget –
Mont Vernon budget reflects the costs of the proposed SAU budget.
- Benefit Costs –
Estimated healthcare increases of 5.8% partially offset by increased employee share of 2.5%.

Nicole explained the first draft of the budget does not address the changes to health insurance the board has approved for the Para educators in the past.

Nicole presented a slide which showed the Staffing Comparison for FY08 and FY09.

For FY08, under Certified Staff, the Village School had 1 Computer / Literacy Media Specialist and in FY09 they are proposing to increase this position to a 1.5.

In FY08, under Non-Certified Staff, there was one Regular Ed Aide and in FY09 the administration is proposing 0 Regular Ed Aides. In FY08, there were 10

Special Ed Aides and in FY09 the proposal is for 11 Special Ed Aides.

Nicole Summarized the Proposed FY09 Budget as follows:

- Overall increase of 4.82%
- Addresses normal increases in cost of living, utilities, and fixed costs.
- Provides for continued educational improvements with a focus on literacy and technology.
- Supports District and SAU goals

Nicole asked board members if they had any questions.

Bruce Schmidt asked what the current class size for grade 5 was. Nicole said currently they have 25 students.

Peter King asked Jim Miner if he had a recent quote to pave the bus loop and parking lot.

Jim Miner said the last quote he received was from October 30, 2007.

John Schwope asked why the bus loop needs to be paved, is it because it's traditional to pave or because it's easier to maintain. John also asked if it was absolutely necessary to have the loop paved this year or could it wait another year.

Jim Miner said paving is the traditional way however, it would also be easier to maintain.

Jim said the bus loop could survive another year without being paved but said he has no idea how much more it would cost by waiting another year. Jim said each year they postpone the project the cost has gone up.

Leo White asked if they could use the Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund to fund the bus loop project.

Jim Miner said he would rather use the Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund for an emergency rather than for

paving the bus loop.

John Schwope said he would like to see if the administration can lower the cost per laptop for the Laptop Cart.

Discussion followed amongst board members.

John Schwope said he would like to see Bruce Chakrin consider purchasing refurbished computers since they cost substantially less than new ones.

Bruce said his concern with this suggestion is finding enough similarly configured machines is difficult under the refurbished method. Bruce said they also cannot buy refurbished computers through the educational channels but would have to buy them online using a credit card. Bruce said you can get a good deal by buying refurbished but not for more than 2-3 of the same configured machines at a time.

John Schwope said he believes the average cost per laptop is higher than what it needs to be.

Bruce said he budgeted \$1,400 per laptop. John said this figure is too high for K-6 kids. John said he thinks they should purchase the laptops for \$1,000 or less.

Bruce said his \$1,400 figure includes a 3-4 year service contract, which is a costly item and costs \$300 per machine.

Kim Roberge asked if the other schools in the district have laptop carts. Bruce said all the other schools do have laptop carts, Wilkins has two laptop carts and Clark has one laptop cart.

Leo White said what he is hearing from board members is they are concerned about the per unit cost and if it can be lowered it would be appreciated.

Leo said he thinks the board would also like to know how the laptop cart will be utilized within the curriculum and through day to day activities at the school.

Bruce Schmidt said he agreed with Bruce Chakrin, the computers all need to be configured the same.

John Schwope said the Village School already has a mix of computers all configured differently.

Jayson Darula asked if Dell was the only vendor available.

Bruce Chakrin said they buy all their computers through Dell to keep the computers and software consistent throughout the district. Bruce said the laptop carts are not purchased through Dell, but a different vendor.

Board members asked why the increase in Other Special Ed Services, 10.1220.338.00. Renee Sparks said it was due to the addition of an outside consultant, an autism specialist and is IEP required.

Dr. Jennings explained the increase in the Info/Technology Specialists line is due to the request to increase the position from .5 to 1.0. Dr. Jennings explained Clark/Wilkins has 1 full time Technology Specialist and 1 Technology Integration Teacher / Lab person.

Leo White asked what the total cost would be by increasing the Information /Technology Specialists time from .5 to 1.0. Lisa Ambrosio said the increase from .5 to 1.0 is \$31,167 and the cost for benefits is \$15,000.

Renee explained Special Ed – In Dist Salaries 10.1220.112.10 has a net gain of one paraprofessional because they are moving one paraprofessional from regular education to special education. The salary increase for paraprofessionals is 3.4%. Currently there are 7 paraprofessionals.

Nicole Heimarck explained under Textbooks, 10.1100.641.10 the request for an additional \$7,121 is for new Science supplies. Nicole explained they are currently in the process of a K-12 SAU Science review. Nicole agreed to present some of their findings at the next board meeting.

Kim asked what the Science review process was looking to achieve. Nicole said they are looking at literacy texts that focus on Science content for K-6 in the case of the Village School.

Board members asked for an explanation on the increase in Salaries – Instructional Assistants, 10.1210.114.10. Renee explained currently they have 1 Special Ed Assistant for K-3 and 1 for grades 4-6 they also have 3 Special Education teachers.

Kathy Skoglund said they did not know why there was such a high increase in the line item and would look into and let the board know at the next meeting.

Leo White said he would like to know what the grant money will be used for next year if it will not be used for Salaries – Curriculum Development. Leo also asked for a job description of the Curriculum Coordinator.

Dr. Jennings said when they hire people through a grant, they don't list whether the position is funded through a grant or not.

Dr. Jennings said they would get back to the board on the proposed increase of \$2,053 in Travel, Conferences, Conventions, 10.2210.580.10. Nicole said she believed the requested funds were for targeted staff development. Nicole said these funds would allow the administration to get very specialized training for staff at the school.

Lisa Ambrosio agreed to check on the requested increase in Co-Curricular Salaries, 10.1410.112.10 of \$1,800. Lisa said \$1,500 of the requested amount is for the board but she did not know what the additional \$300 was needed for but agreed to find out and let the board know.

Bruce said under Instructional Materials, 10.1100.615.10, the comment might not be needed since it says plus science. Lisa said she would check to see what the requested increase of \$1,212 in the line was for and let the board know.

John Schwope asked what the request for \$178 under Electronic Information is for under 10.1100.642.10. The administration said they would check with Meredith since they did not know what it was for.

Leo White requested the board receive the narrative to the budget line items as soon as possible, so they will be more informed for the next board meeting.

John Schwope said he would like to see the stage lighting put back into the budget. The administration agreed to include it in the next draft and at the next board meeting the board would decide whether to keep it in the budget or take it out.

2. Proposed Warrants – Dr. Jennings provided board members with a handout in their board packets entitled Mont Vernon School District Draft Annual Meeting FY09 Warrant State of New Hampshire.

Dr. Jennings said at the next board meeting the board could decide whether or not they want the warrant articles presented to the public.

Dr. Jennings said for Article 3, the board will need to decide whether or not they want to add to the School Property Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund. Dr. Jennings said the current balance in the account is \$21,000.

The board will also have to decide if they want to add funds to Article 4, Fund for Unfunded Liabilities for Retiring Employees Expendable Trust Fund. Currently the balance in the fund is \$30,000 and Dr. Jennings said they have no employees projected for retirement this year.

Dr. Jennings said Article 5, would be to establish a capital reserve fund for the purpose of educating educationally disabled children which was proposed last year but the board did not want to establish such a fund last year. Dr. Jennings wants to know if the board wants to consider establishing the fund this year.

Leo White asked if the administration had any numbers

in mind for increasing the funds in Articles 3 and 4.

Jim Miner said he would like an additional \$10,000 for Article 3, the Property Maintenance Expendable Trust fund.

Dr. Jennings said she thinks an additional \$30,000 would be good for the Fund for Unfunded Liabilities for Retiring Employees Expendable Trust Fund, Article 4.

Leo White said he was willing to consider each of the proposed warrant articles but requested the administration come to the next board meeting with justified proposed numbers in order for the board to decide on each of the warrant articles.

- C. Information Communication Technology – Tom Campell, introduced himself to the board as the Technology Integration person at the Village School.

Tom introduced Bridget Casey, a student at the Village School who presented a story “About the Beach” she did in partnership with the Literacy initiative at the school.

Board members thanked Bridget for her presentation.

Tom told board members his presentation was about Information Communication Technology.

Tom said he would be discussing 21st Century Literacy as well as Redefining Literacy for the 21st Century.

Tom compared 20th Century Literacy and 21st Century Contemporary Literacy.

Tom described the “Old” Computer Class:

- Students were sent to technology instruction.
- Focus was on developing skills.
- Instruction was independent of what was happening in the classroom.
- Instruction was designed to teach “features” of the tool.

- In all grades there was little to no connection to the classroom curriculum. In early grades, children associate computers with playing.

Integrated Curriculum Technology (ICT) – Why Do It This Way?

Tom said because technology improves student performance when it supports the curriculum.

Tom said Ms. Allwarden is working with ePortfolio to aid in the Literacy initiative. Tom said ePortfolio is making a connection and demonstrating growth by expanding the “writing cycle.” Tom suggested Ann come to a future board meeting to present ePortfolio.

Tom said through ePortfolio, they are now able to publish and share children’s works.

Other teachers utilizing ICT is Senor Brooks in Spanish, Ms. Belak, Guidance – how to get along with others, utilizing an interactive website.

Tom discussed Keyboarding:

- Classes book time online.
- Grades 2-3 book 20 minute chunks of time.
- Grades 4-6 book 30 minute chunks of time.

Tom explained the schools Math and Social Studies publishers are deploying some resources online.

Tom explained by improving Information Communication Technology they are trying to:

- Build relationships
- Take risks
- Rediscover curiosity
- Carefully and continually assess and modify practices.

Board members were asked if they had any questions for

Tom.

Jayson asked how classes go about booking chunks of time for Keyboarding. Tom said the time from class to class varies.

Leo White asked Tom what he needed to be more effective. Tom said he needs more time and more opportunity.

Leo White and board members thanked Tom for a great presentation.

A. **Policies – 2nd Reading** –

VI. ACTION ITEMS

Health Related Policies –

EBBC – Emergency Care and First Aid
 IMAH – Health Education – Daily Physical Activity
 JLCD – Administering Medication to Students

Administrative Policies –

EH – Data Management (Public Use of School Records)
 GBCD – Background Investigation and Criminal Records Check

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Howard Brown to adopt Policies EBBC, IMAH, JLCD, EH, and GBCD as presented. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

A. **Policies – 1st Reading**

VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

School Community Relations Policies

KA – School, Community and Home Relations

Student Policies

JH – Student Absences and Excuses
 JI – Student Rights and Responsibilities
 JLDDBA – Behavior Management and Intervention

Board members had no comments regarding the above policies as presented.

The policies will be moved to a second reading at the next board meeting.

B. **Mont Vernon Legal Counsel** – Dr. Jennings suggested the board begin their search for legal counsel. Dr. Jennings explained currently, Mont Vernon has no legal counsel hired by the board.

Dr. Jennings said she is suggesting they hire their own legal counsel since they will be negotiating the tuition agreement with Amherst as well as a new collective bargaining agreement.

John Schwope asked if Dr. Jennings had any suggestions as to what firms the board should look at and Dr. Jennings said, yes she did, and would provide some recommendations to the board and start the process after the first of the year, so they can begin the search process in February.

Bruce Schmidt said he spoke with the PTA President and the Holiday Happenings was a big success.

VIII. OTHER

The PTA plans on hosting another movie night in January.

The next scheduled PTA meeting is January 8, 2008, at 11 a.m.

A motion was made by Howard Brown to adjourn the meeting. Jayson Darula seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (5-0) The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

IX. REVIEW OF MEETING/ADJOURN