

MINUTES
MONT VERNON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
December 10, 2009
MONT VERNON VILLAGE SCHOOL LIBRARY

Present:

ATTENDANCE

Mont Vernon School Board: Jayson Darula, Trevor Girard, Kim Roberge, Bruce Schmidt, and Leo White
Administrative Team: Sue Blair, Nicole Heimarck, Dr. Mary Jennings, Betty Shankel, Renea Sparks and Karen Taylor
Faculty: Melanie Jones, Alma Garcia, Charlene Brown
Public: Sue Casey, Angela Hazen, Nicole Martin, Leslie McCann, Leeanne Steenhoek, and Jessica Weisberg
Budget Committee: Joe Conrad, Joe Fleurette
Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Principal's Report** – Board members received the Principal's Report dated December 10, 2009, in their board packets.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sue Blair told board members as of December 4, 2009, the student population is 244, one less since the last board meeting.

Sue told board members Parent Teacher Conferences were held during the month of November. Sue said they had an excellent turnout for conferences this year. Sue said several classrooms reported 100% attendance by parents.

Sue told board members one of the discussions being held by the PTA and some community members is establishing a Butterfly Garden in memory of Gail Westergren. The garden would have some of Gail's favorite perennials in it.

Sue told board members when she last checked with Mrs.

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Dunne, she was told there are 21 students signed up for the Spelling Bee competition that is held in January. The students meet twice a week.

Sue also spoke about the Geography Bee group. Sue said the student's meet twice a week during recess. Students can come to the two meetings however, they have to go to at least one meeting per week. There are twenty five students signed up for the Geography Bee group.

Leo White asked if any one from the Public had any comments.

III. PUBLIC TIME

The Lego Team gave board members a presentation. The Lego Team came in 4th out of 52 in the states competition. The team works really hard and they met 2 to 3 times per week for the past 5 months.

The Lego Team also introduced a new way for parents to notify the Village School about their child's dismissal for the day. The Lego Team created a program on the Angel Network and named it Pickup Patrol. The Lego Team did a play to introduce Pickup Patrol to the board as well as other meeting attendees.

The Lego Team thanked Principal Blair for supporting their idea. They also thanked Mr. Campbell and Mr. Chakrin for all their help.

Pickup Patrol will begin to be used in January.

Eileen Naber read from a prepared statement.

Eileen said, as you are probably aware, there is a decrease of \$129,120 in the total of lines 5110 and 5221 in FY11 as compared to FY10 due to the final payments of two bond issues.

Eileen said she asks that when the board examines the

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

FY11 budget as relating to FY10 please do not use \$4,293,704 for your comparison. Eileen said subtracting the decrease in bond payments (\$129,120) from the FY10 Total Fund 10 Budget (\$4,293,704) gives you the appropriate comparison number (\$4,164,583) for the increase in the total budget for FY11.

Eileen said this method was not used last year and we were told the FY10 budget was only going up .19% while in reality the operating budget was increasing .876% not including the teacher's salaries. Eileen said this was unfair to the voters. Eileen said she is asking for forthrightness this year.

Betty Shankel said she understands what Eileen is saying however; they need to be compliant with the law and show budget to budget figures.

Sarah Lawrence, a meeting attendee thanked the administration and the board for considering everything in the budget carefully. Sarah said she urged the board to consider putting the Spanish program back in at 100%. Sarah said they would be negligent if they didn't discuss putting the Spanish program back in at 100%.

Leo White said he would like to hear what meeting attendees have to say with regards to the budget and the board welcomes their feedback during the budget presentation.

The A. Minutes 1. November 12, 2009, were pulled from the Consent Agenda.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

The B. Transfers were pulled from the Consent Agenda.

A motion was made by Jayson Darula to approve the A. Minutes 1. November 12, 2009 as amended. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. Four board members voted in favor of the motion with one abstention, Kim

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Roberge. The motion passed. (4-0-1)

A motion was made by Jayson Darula to approve Consent Agenda Item B. Transfers. Bruce Schmidt seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

- A. FY09 Audit - Board members received a copy of the Mont Vernon School District Annual Financial Statements for the Year Ended June 30, 2009.

**V. PRESENTATIONS /
DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Sheryl Stephens Burke from Melanson Heath & Company thanked the Mont Vernon School District for having them as their auditors again this year.

Sheryl told board members the district had a very smooth audit this year. Sheryl said there were no adjusting journal entries made.

Sheryl referred board members to page 10, The Statement of Net Assets as of June 30, 2009, and specifically to the Liabilities section under Noncurrent and the section labeled OPEB Liability, which Sheryl explained is new this year and is a result of the Actuarial Study. The total liability is 22,945.

Sheryl referred board members to page 11 of the Financial Statements, Statement of Activities where the Change in Net Assets was 3,213, which is the Net Income for the Year.

Sheryl had board members look at page 16 entitled Statement of Revenues and Other Sources, and Expenditures and Other Uses – Budget and Actual. Sheryl told board members there was a Budget Surplus of \$129,290 at the end of the year June 30, 2009.

Board members received a copy of the Management Letter
FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

for the Year Ended June 30, 2009.

The Management Letter offered no new recommendations however; it did provide the Status of the Prior Year Recommendations, which was for the District to Consider Implementing Internal Control Improvements and to improve the Student Activity Fund Policies and Procedures.

Sheryl told board members during the fiscal year 2009, the District began periodically monitoring certain aspects of its financial operations. Updates to key financial policies and procedures, and a written internal control framework using the COSO model using pre-printed checklists and forms, were also completed.

Sheryl said based on the COSO documentation, the District should periodically perform its own risk assessment to determine where it may be vulnerable to fraud or material misstatement.

Sheryl explained with regards to the Student Activity Fund, in the prior year audit, they recommended the District adhere to the well designed procedures established in its student activity procedures manual and monitor student activity funds on an ongoing basis.

Sheryl said during the fiscal year 2009 audit, they observed the District monitoring student activity funds throughout the year. Sheryl said there is no further action needed.

Leo White congratulated Betty Shankel and the Finance Office for a great job.

Betty thanked Lisa Ambrosio and Karen Taylor for all the work they did. Betty Shankel also thanked Katie Hannan, the Bookkeeper who goes to the Village School monthly to monitor the Student Activity Fund.

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Betty also thanked Sheryl Stephens Burke for her assistance this year.

- B. Water Treatment Report – Board members received a copy of a letter addressed to the Mont Vernon School Board from Jim Miner regarding the Mont Vernon Village School Water – Uranium Content dated November 11, 2009.

Jim reminded board members at the last board meeting on October 28, 2009, he told the board the NHDES had advised the district that in February 2009, the Uranium content in the water from the MVVS well exceeded the recommended content level of 30 ug/L. Jim said this was also confirmed by a testing done in March of 2009 which showed the level at 53 ug/L.

Jim said although there is no requirement that action be taken due to the classification of our well as non-community, partial year service, the NHDES suggested that it be considered.

Jim also presented some points for consideration. Jim said the cost to alleviate the problem is \$6,000.

Jim Miner recommended that treatment be installed as soon as funding could be made available either through transferring 2010 funds or by a budget addition to the 2011 proposed budget.

Board members asked Betty if they had available funds in the 2010 budget. Betty said they expect to run a surplus of approximately \$150,000 this year.

Bruce Schmidt said he is in favor of spending the \$6,000 from the 2010 budget now to correct the problem.

Leo White told board members they had three options:

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

- Do nothing
- Roll the cost into the proposed 2011-2012 budget
- Do now, with 2010 funds

Trevor Girard said he was not in favor of spending the \$6,000 right now because he didn't see the problem to be a major health issue.

Kim Roberge asked how many kids refill their water bottles from the school bubbler. Sue Blair said it was hard to say how many students refill their bottles from the bubbler but she believes there are quite a few.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to appropriate the funds to install the water treatment to correct the uranium levels at the Mont Vernon Village School through this years 2010 fiscal funds. Jayson Darula seconded the motion. Four board members voted in favor of the motion with one opposed, Trevor Girard. The motion passed. (4-1-0)

- C. FY11 Budget: Draft 1 – Susan Blair provided the Overview of the FY 2011 Budget.

Board members also received several handouts to aid them in their review of the proposed 2011 Budget.

The handouts included the Mont Vernon Budget Summary – FY11 – Draft Revised December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon Computer Inventory dated December 09, and the Mont Vernon Technology Budget – Proposed 2010-2011 dated November 19, 2009.

Sue provided a Review of the Current Budget – FY 10 –

- Supports the needs of students with a focus on appropriate instructional materials in all curriculum/instructional areas/needs.
 - Supports educational goals by addressing ongoing
- FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

- commitment to literacy and math without loss of focus on the importance of social studies, science and integrated arts.
- Supports/maintains appropriate student/teacher ration.
- Adequately supports the ELL (English Language Learners) needs.
- Provides safe environment.

Sue presented the Current Enrollments and Projections:

- Current enrollment as of December 4th is 244 at MVVS and 62 at AMS.
- The Projected enrollment at the Village School is 218 and at Amherst Middle School its 76. The projected enrollment for the Middle School includes + 2 students.

Also provided was a chart which showed the Village School Enrollment Comparison by Grade for FY10 and FY11.

A slide was also shown detailing the Projected Class Size for FY11 by Grade.

Sue presented the FY 11 Educational Programming

- Continues support of SAU #39 5-year literacy goal.
- Addition of .5 FTE Reading Specialist – Sue explained this would support part of the Literacy Goal, they would be able to utilize Dibels, which they haven't had the chance to administer and review with the teachers.

Board members asked if there was research which showed the direct correlation to assisting students in the early grade years in reading.

Sue said they could provide data which shows the
FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

effectiveness of a reading specialist in the early years for students.

Nicole said at one point, the district did have a reading specialist, there was always someone certified as a reading specialist on staff.

Nicole told board members if they do not have a reading specialist on staff, then they would not meet the minimum standard requirements. Nicole explained they are trying to be pro-active by replacing this position before it becomes an issue.

- Commitment to early literacy intervention with adoption and implementation in all grade levels of Scott Foresman Reading Program.
- Supports SINI/DINI Plan
- Supports K-3 focus on structured approach for teaching appropriate letter formation (Zaner-Bloser Handwriting Program) – Sue told board members this was funded by the Reap Grant this year.
- Continues to provide for the needs of students through the Early Intervention and Special Education.
- Includes a focus on integration of technology into the everyday learning and practices of teacher/student.

Sue presented the Educational Programming Budget Impact as follows:

- Scott Foresman Core Reading Program Implementation - \$11,655 – the program will be fully implemented K-6 after this investment.
- Resource Rich Classrooms (Technology) - \$24,320
- Improve wide-area network: \$5,500
- Wireless Infrastructure: \$9,5000
- Brain Pop License (DI) – this is for children, involves creative thinking: \$2,000

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

- Responsive Classroom: \$1,000

Sue presented the Additional Considerations (costs which they have little to no control over)

- Special Education Costs – overall increase 1.64%
- Operation & Maintenance – overall increase 5.06%
- Benefit costs – estimated healthcare increase of 22.5%, estimated dental insurance increases of 5.5%, and teacher pension increase of 15.23%.

A slide was presented, which detailed the Staffing Comparison for FY10 and FY11. Sue Blair said the only change under the Certified Staff was the request for a part time Reading Specialist. Sue said under Non-Certified Staff, there is a reduction of two Special Education Para-educators.

Sue presented the Draft Warrant Articles to board members.

The first draft warrant article was in regards to appropriating funds to be added to the School Property Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund.

The draft warrant article was written with raising and appropriating up to \$30,000 be added to the fund.

The \$30,000 figure came from Jim Miner. Board members questioned whether or not this amount needed to be added in one year. Currently, a 5-year maintenance plan is being updated and board members agreed once this document is received and reviewed, a more accurate number can be determined.

The next warrant article reviewed was with regards to the FY11 budget.

Sue presented the draft warrant article which was to

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

discontinue the Mont Vernon School District Land Capital Reserve Fund which was created in March 2002. If approved, the funds would be transferred to the Mont Vernon School District's general fund. A majority vote would be required in order for this to pass.

The current balance in the Land Capital Reserve Fund is \$61,000.

The final draft warrant article presented was with regards to seeing if the school district would vote to raise and appropriate \$48,852 to fund expanded health insurance benefits for the Mont Vernon Village School Para-professional staff.

Board members requested the dollar figure if all Para-professionals accept the family plan benefits.

This information will be provided at the next board meeting.

Dr. Jennings told board members the administration was recommending a warrant article be added for a Tuition Reserve Expendable Trust Fund.

Dr. Jennings explained each year they build in two additional people into the budget for the Amherst Middle School Tuition. Dr. Jennings said if not used, those two people could be part of the Tuition Reserve Expendable Trust.

Kim Roberge said she disagrees with the need for this warrant article.

Sue Summarized the Proposed FY11 Budget:

- Decrease of two Para-educators at Mont Vernon Village School.
 - Addresses normal increases in cost of living,
- FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

- utilities, fixed costs.
- Provides for continued educational improvements with a continued focus on literacy, math and technology.
 - Supports District and SAU goals – Literacy initiative and SINI/DINI Plan
 - NWEA assessment for all students in grades 2 through 6 in reading and mathematics.
 - Overall increase of 3.87% (approximately \$172,000 increase of which \$127,762 is for the Amherst tuition increase)

Board members as well as meeting attendees were able to ask questions and provide input.

Meeting attendees asked if the administration had considered returning the Spanish position back to full time rather than a .6 position.

Sue Blair said she had spoken with Alma and while she understands the importance of the Spanish position, she also recognizes the importance of reading and having students learn to read in the early years, thus the importance of also having a Reading Specialist.

Nicole Martin said she would like to see the Spanish position full time rather than at a .6. Nicole suggested they make the position a full time one and let the voters decide if it should remain full time or if they decide to reduce it again.

Angela Hazen said she agreed with Nicole Martin, that the Spanish position should be returned to full time so that the voters could decide since the vote was so close last year. Angela said she would like to see the position voted on again.

Bruce Schmidt asked if the administration could determine what the increase from a .6 to a 1.0 position would cost per

household. Bruce also asked if they could provide details as to how Spanish would be integrated into the curriculum if it were to become full time again.

Susan Blair said she could provide the board with this information.

Bruce said he is in support of full time Spanish however, he would like to see it integrated.

Kim Roberge said Spanish going from .6 to 1.0 should not be about the teacher, but about the program. Kim said she would love to see the numbers. Kim said our students are the only ones in the District that have Spanish in K-6.

Jayson Darula asked if Clark/Wilkins had any plans of introducing Spanish in K-6.

AMS started teaching Spanish in 6th grade and also teaches it in 7th, and 8th grade.

LeeAnne Steenhoek said the early learning of Spanish at the Village School won't get taken away by the reduced Spanish time at the Middle School.

Board members were given the opportunity to review the budget line by line and ask questions.

Kim Roberge asked why the large increase under General Supplies, 10.1100.610.10. The administration agreed to provide additional detail regarding this line item.

Bruce Schmidt asked why such a big decrease in the Instructional Materials line item, 10.1100.615.10. Nicole Heimarck said it was due to the decrease in the cost of the Science kits.

The board asked to have a presentation at the next meeting with regards to the Computer Technology Budget.

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Trevor Girard said the Budget Committee also wants a technology presentation.

The board also wants to know how the computer integration is working and how does the schedule work.

Under Co-Curricular Salaries, 10.1410.112.10, it was agreed if the position wasn't anticipated then the cost should not be included in the budgeted amount for the next draft.

Salaries, CFG Coaches, 10.2210.113.30 was questioned because it was a new line in the budget. Currently, this line item is being funded through the Title IIA Grant.

Under Staff Development Support, 10.2210.240.10, it was agreed the administration would verify the number of professional staff members that should be budgeted for in this line.

Kim Roberge suggested the Administration look at Legal Fees, 10.210.331.00 to see where we are at this year in order to make sure we are budgeting appropriately for FY11.

The administration will do a presentation on the Administrative Salaries, 10.2410.111.10 at the next board meeting.

Bruce Schmidt questioned the following accounts – Printing, 10.2410.550.10, Travel, Conferences, Conventions, 10.2410.580.10, and Office Supplies, 10.2410.610.10. Bruce said the FY09 Voted Budget to Actual Expenses don't seem to make since. Bruce said if there are planned expenses in each account then okay, but if not, then the line items should be reduced.

Under New Equipment, 10.2620.731.10, the Uranium

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Water Treatment System will be taken out since it was approved at this board meeting to be replaced now using FY10 funds.

Board members reviewed a handout, which detailed a total proposed budget increase for all funds of \$168,453, representing a 3.79% increase.

Board members also received a copy of the Mont Vernon School District Revenue Summary, FY11 – Draft dated 12/11/09.

The handout details the Budgeted Expenditures for all Funds, which has a proposed increase of \$171,258 in 2010-2011 as compared to 2009-2010.

The handout is forecasting a decrease in State Aid of \$55,379, and a decrease in Federal Aid of \$547.

Local Revenue is expected to decrease by \$3,609.

The Estimated Tax Impact for the MVVS Tax Rate (Local & State) is .89 per \$1,000. On a \$400,000 home the tax impact would be \$356.

Leo White said the board and administration has some work to do, as a 7.64% increase is too high. Also, the proposed budget does not include salary increases or warrant articles.

Leo White said he appreciated all the comments from the meeting attendees as well as board members and welcomed additional input over the next couple of months.

Dr. Jennings said the administration will look at ways to bring the budget in lower.

Dr. Jennings said it would be in the administrations best interest to educate everyone about the budget up front – for

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

example the Budget Committee and School Board.

Leo White asked if the administration could prioritize in reverse order what is most important.

Dr. Jennings said the administration could do this but most likely after the next draft.

Joe Flurette, asked if the administration could provide the Budget Committee with the past five years worth of actuals.

Joe also asked if they could provide the number of positions that apply for each category. Also, in the 09-10 positions how many people are in each category.

D. Principal Search Process – Board members received a copy of the Mont Vernon Principal Search Timeline in their board packets.

Dr. Jennings told board members she was introducing this procedure at this board meeting and they would be posting the position on line by the end of next week. Dr. Jennings said she planned on talking with the staff next week to see how extensive the search should be and to see what desired traits, characteristics and qualities the Principal should possess.

Dr. Jennings told board members based on the timeline as presented, she planned on bringing forward a nomination to the School Board at their board meeting on March 9, 2010.

Also presented was the proposed makeup of the MVVS Principal Search Committee. The committee would consist of 15 plus the Superintendent.

Dr. Jennings suggested reducing the number of committee members. She suggested they have 2 School Board Members, 3 Certified Staff, 1 Paraprofessional, 1 SAU

FINAL Minutes of December 10, 2009, Mont Vernon School Board Meeting

Administrator, and 2 Community Members/PTA.

The Community Member/PTA Member openings would be posted in the Library, Post Office, etcetera. Interested volunteers could respond to the SAU HR Department.

Board Members agreed to take Dr. Jennings' recommendation to reduce the committee to 10 members.

Kim Roberge and Bruce Schmidt volunteered to serve on the MVVS Principal Search Committee.

- A. Policies – 1st Reading – Board members received copies of the following policies in their board packets – DJ – Purchasing, DJB – Purchasing Procedures, DJD – Cooperative Purchasing, DJE – Bidding Requirements, and DJB-R – Procedures.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

All policies were presented for their first reading at the board meeting.

- A. Race to the Top – Memorandum of Understanding – Board members received a copy of the Race to the Top New Hampshire Participating Local Education Agency Memorandum of Understanding in their board packets.

VII. ACTION ITEM

Also provided was a copy of the Race to the Top Participating Districts' Proposal.

Dr. Jennings told board members the administration met with Peggy Silva and they started looking at costs.

Dr. Jennings said if the board approves the Memorandum of Understanding, it does not tie them to any obligations.

Dr. Jennings said if their proposal is accepted, they would spend the grant as described in their proposal.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt for Mont Vernon to enter into the Memorandum of Understanding with the State of NH to be a participating LEA in the Race to the Top Grant. Kim Roberge seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

Leo White told board members the Amherst Heritage Commission is celebrating their 25th Anniversary on Sunday, January 17, 2010. Leo said if any board members are interested in attending they RSVP to him so he can let the Heritage Commission know.

VIII. OTHER

Dr. Jennings reminded board members the H1N1 Clinic is scheduled for December 19, 2009.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to adjourn the meeting. Jayson Darula seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0) The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

IX. ADJOURN