

**MONT VERNON SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
April 14, 2011
MONT VERNON VILLAGE SCHOOL LIBRARY**

Kim Roberge called the board meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Present:

ATTENDANCE

Mont Vernon School Board: Tom Driscoll, Trevor Girard, Kim Roberge, John Quinlan, and Bruce Schmidt

Administrative Team: Sue Blair, Nicole Heimarck, Dr. Mary Jennings, Betty Shankel, and Renea Sparks

Faculty/Administrators: Sheila Asselin, Barbara Belak, Peter Denio, Fay Deysher, Melanie Jones, Meghan Libby, and Jan Mattie

Public: Sue Granfors, Laurie Hayes, Leslie McCann, Michelle Paquette, Jessica Weisburg, and Leo White

Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

Board members received a copy of the Principals Report dated April 14, 2011, in their board packets. **II. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Sue said the student population increased by 1 as compared to last month. The total population is 243.

Sue told board members the Mont Vernon Village School did not make AYP in mathematics and reading in one of their subgroups. Sue said they are in the process of preparing a report for the board for next month.

Sue told board members the NWEA Testing window is now open. Testing will occur for grades 2-6 until the middle of May. All parents have been notified of the schedule.

Bruce said he really liked the schedule he received and thanked Sue for providing this to parents.

Sue said Kindergarten Registration was held on Tuesday, April 12, 2011. To date they believe they have 26

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students attending Kindergarten for the 2011-2012 school year.

Sue told board members about the 6th grade Transition to the Middle School. Sue said the AMS staff would be at the Village School May 24th – May 26th. MVVS students will be given a Math Assessment to determine the appropriate class placement. Also, there will be a parent night with Porter Dodge, AMS Principal.

Sue told board members the total minutes read for the Read to Feed Program was 180,000 and the amount pledged was \$2,600. The money will go to the Heifer Foundation. Sue thanked Amy White and all the staff for their hard work.

Sue told board members the Lego Club has been canceled for the remainder of the year due to extenuating circumstances. Sue said they hope to begin again in the fall.

Sue said the Math Club has been meeting and their attendance has increased to 20 students. Sue said they are alternating club meetings between Tuesday and Wednesday each week to increase students' ability to attend.

Sue asked for clarification from the board as to supplies they should not request from parents.

Also highlighted on the Principal's Report were some upcoming events.

Sue told board members Mont Vernon needs a Math Program Review Representative since our representative had to resign and they would like to have representation. Sue said they are looking for a Parent/Community Representative. Leslie McCann volunteered to serve on this committee.

Sue thanked Leslie for volunteering to serve on the Math Program Review Committee.

Kim asked if there were any comments from the public.

III. PUBLIC TIME

Leslie McCann asked if Girl Scout Troup 22720 could do a service project at the school. Leslie said they wanted to build benches to be put on the trail behind the school. Leslie said they took the request to the Selectmen and they said it was okay, but they would need permission from the school board since it was on school property.

Bill Archibald asked if the board could contact the
A motion was made by John Quinlan to accept the request by Girl Scout Troup # 22720 to work on a service project at the Village School for benches on the trail. Trevor Girard seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

Bill Archibald requested he receive a copy of the Agenda packet prior to board meetings. Also, he is requesting he receive minutes within 72 hours of the meeting as per the law requires.

Kim Roberge said board members receive Agenda Packets usually the Friday prior to the board meeting.

The board / administration will contact the Moderator to reconvene the Budget Committee by September 15, 2011.

All Consent Agenda Items were pulled.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to approve Consent Agenda Item IV. A. Minutes – March 17, 2011, as amended. John Quinlan seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

A motion was made by John Quinlan to approve Consent Agenda Item IV. B. Donation to the General Fund – for \$250.00 from the Schmidt's. Tom Driscoll seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion with one abstention, Bruce

Schmidt, the motion passed. (4-0-1)

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to accept Consent Agenda Item IV. C. Resignations as presented. Trevor Girard seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

- A. Data Teams – Barbara Belak told board members the MVVS Data Team consists of the following individuals: Barbara Belak, Charline Brown, Tom Campbell, Lyndsay Curtis, Fay Deysher, Melanie Jones and Scott Prescott.

Barbara Belak told board members they started analyzing the data at the beginning of this year.

Barbara explained there are different kinds of assessments given to the children and they include:

- Informal Formative Assessments
- Everyday Environment
- Formative Assessments
- Teacher Constructed
- Curriculum Content – Math, Social Studies, and Language Arts.
- Summative Assessments – NECAP, NWEA
- Summative, Formal or Both – Dibels

Barbara said while everyone hears more about NECAP and to a lesser degree NWEA and Dibels, data can be found everywhere in a school.

Barbara said the purpose of the Data Team is to assist the teachers in making good informed decisions for their children's learning.

Barbara said as a Data Team, they are working on increasing the ability of our professionals to ask questions of the data provided from these assessments, but we are also looking towards a more holistic view of data.

Barbara said informal formative assessments occur throughout each school day.

Fay Deysher told board members benchmarking in reading is done through Dibels - and Reading Street. Fay said benchmarking provides a starting point for student learning. Dibels is given three times per year to students in grades K-4. Fay said they benchmark in the beginning, middle and end of year and in between they progress monitor.

Jan Mattie told board members for math, they look at NECAP and NWEA data for class strengths and weaknesses, individual student discrepancies between performance in class and scores, and identifying where individuals are in their learning.

Jan said XtraMath is a free web program for students, teachers and parents and it helps kids master basic math facts. It also provides targeted practice and progress monitoring for students and teachers.

Peter Denio, 6th grade teacher at MVVS explained some of the ways he uses data in his practice.

Barbara explained as a data team, they expect to mature and develop questions that convert data into information, then, work to apply the information in order to make knowledgeable decisions about their teaching and learning models.

Sue said the data team reflects on the data, it is all about student learning, what is hidden in the numbers, what are the students mastering, struggling with, etcetera?

Sue said the Data Team meets every Wednesday morning.

Barbara presented the Vision Guiding the Data Teams Work:

- Holistic view of data and its use

- Increase capacity to use data both as a school and as individuals.
 - Regular use of data to inform instructional decisions.
- B. Seventh Grade Survey – Barbara Belak told board members they surveyed the current 7th grade students, last years 6th grade Mont Vernon Village School Students about their experience at MVVS. The purpose of the survey was to help us to help other MVVS students.

Barbara said the thought to do this survey originated from a 2009 Professional Development group interested in obtaining students insights into academic ownership.

Barbara said the 1st version was done in Angel and self administered and the current version had revised content, and was administered by the Guidance Counselor of MVVS at AMS and done through the Angel website.

Barbara said the survey design had 4 content areas:

Academic review – did you feel prepared in specific areas when you joined AMS.

Learning environment – your academic skills and comfort at MVVS.

Staff/students – your interactions with people.

Personal Reflection – what do you wish you did differently, what advice would you give?

Students were asked to respond to the following areas using Neutral, Agree or Disagree.

Academic Subject Preparation – I felt prepared to:

- Math
- Language Arts
- Science

- Social Studies

Academic Skills and Environment – I felt prepared to:

- Note Take
- Time Management
- Angel
- Resources
- Homework
- Learn Risk
- Learn Style

Barbara provided some of the Academic Skills comments students provided.

- Homework much more at AMS.
- Roman Numeral format for note taking worked.
- Mont Vernon gives much more time for projects.
- Know how to upload files to Angel.
- Know my learning style.

Students were asked to respond to questions regarding the MVVS staff and their interactions with staff and students. They were asked to respond using Neutral, Agree or Disagree.

- Bullying was problem
- Staff was helpful
- Teacher interested
- Helped learn from mistakes
- Celebrated academics
- Felt safe at school
- Could function with AMS peers.

Barbara provided the following comments by the students:

- Bullying, no problem, told people my problems, friends or principal.
- Teachers talked to me.
- Teachers explained what I did wrong.
- Felt safe, all together felt safe with each other,

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teachers always watching, school size helped.

Barbara then provided Looking Back Comments from Students (I wish I had . . .)

- I made more friends at AMS before I graduated.
- Wish there was theatre, more clubs at MVVS.
- Basketball team needed at MVVS.
- Wish I had studied harder at MVVS.
- Wish I knew more math before AMS.
- Heartbreak to leave MVVS.

Barbara provided the following comments when students were asked to Describe MVVS (If someone was moving here)

- Quite nice school, good peers.
- Great overall experience.
- Small, but feel welcomed.
- Small, can't get lost, teacher nice.
- Amazing school with little homework, nice teachers.
- Small, nice, fun educational
- Very different
- MVVS takes in new people well.
- Sweet school.

Barbara said they passed this information back to the 6th grade teachers a while ago.

Barbara said they plan on giving this survey again next year and will check for trends.

Tom Driscoll asked if they considered adding parents to the survey and they are looking into this possibility.

- C. Review of Policy JICK: Bullying – Board members received a copy of the policy in their board packets. Dr. Jennings said they had to implement this policy by law by April 1, 2011. Dr. Jennings said they put this in the board packets so that board members are aware of what

they're expecting at all schools in the districts.

Tom Driscoll asked if the students were educated on this policy. Dr. Jennings said they were educated on the new bullying policy. Dr. Jennings said the law required the districts to educate the students.

Sue Blair said they have a Social Responsibility Curriculum at the Village School called the Tiger Program this year and plan on having it again next year.

- D. Quarterly Report: FY11 Budget – Board members received a copy of the Mont Vernon School District Quarterly Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 dated July 1, 2010 – March 31, 2011.

Betty Shankel told board members that Catastrophic Aid was a little higher than anticipated; therefore, they are expecting approximately \$17,000 more than was anticipated.

Betty told board members on the Expense side, they are anticipating a surplus of \$238,000. This is due to a savings in salaries and benefits in Regular Education, Special Education, Student Support Services, Instructional Support Services, Principal's Office, and Operations and Maintenance. Also their was a lower than anticipated cost in Student Transportation, an early payment of interest in Debt Service and lower than anticipated costs for Tuition to AMS.

Betty told board members this figure is \$45,000 more than what they presented to the voters at Deliberative Session. Betty said at Deliberative, they anticipated a surplus of \$210,000.

- A. State Budget Impact on MVSD Budget – Board members received a handout dated April 12, 2011, from Dr. Jennings regarding the Response to the Legislative Budget Consideration.

VI. ACTION ITEMS

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The memo detailed the fact that the FY12 State Budget presented by the Governor to the House and Senate does not contain any teacher pension contributions, meaning that this 35% contribution would be pushed down to the FY12 Mont Vernon budget at a cost of \$64,573. The House Speaker predicts the state would continue with 25% of the contribution rather than 0%, pushing down \$18,409 dollars.

With new projections on health insurance savings, Mont Vernon will save \$4,600 in next year's budget, the FY12 fiscal shortfall due to pension costs could range from \$13,809 to \$59,973. The decision on this won't be made until the end of the legislative session in June.

Dr. Jennings' memo stated to prepare for this possibility there were several options open to the board at this time.

1. Do nothing. When the legislation occurs, call a special town meeting and propose a new budget with these additional costs included in it. Or wait until next year and if going into deficit spending, call a special meeting. In either case, the board could or could not be granted additional funds by the taxpayers.
2. Use the surplus funds anticipated from the FY11 budget. This surplus is projected to be approximately \$254,900 (See attachment A) At the Deliberative Session, we projected a surplus of \$210,000. If more pension costs are pushed down, then Mont Vernon would return \$15,100 less than projected at Deliberative. (See attachment B)
3. Assume the Adequacy Aide amount will change and fund this pension deficit from the surplus. In this proposal, the maximum \$60,000 pension shortfall would be funded through FY11 surplus; however with \$143,079 increase in Adequacy Aide, this shortfall would be funded. The tax rate for the Mont Vernon citizen due to the Mont Vernon budget would drop from \$1.40 per \$1,000 to \$1.07 per \$1,000. (See Attachments C and D)

4. Reduce the FY12 budget now and reinstate those cuts if none or some of the state budget legislation passes. As presented at the last Mont Vernon meeting, to accomplish this, we need to reduce:
 - a. A .6 professional staff position with benefits, \$23,000. This option must be addressed before the April 15th deadline for staff renewals.
 - b. Reduce school services by \$20,500, which would include cutting technology equipment, the Science Camp program, all travel and conferences for office staff and principal and eliminate district funded field trips. (See Attachment E)

Board members received a handout in their board packet regarding the FY12 Budget Planning to Compensate for the Governor's Budget. (Attachment B) The handout provided the following details:

Pension Shortfall per Governor's Budget \$64,600
 Projected Savings on Health Insurance Budget \$4,600
 Net FY12 Budget Shortfall \$60,000

Current Projected FY11 Surplus \$254,900
 Recommended FY12 Budget Amounts to be Expended in FY11 \$60,000
 Net Projected Surplus \$194,900

Net Projected FY11 Surplus \$194,900
 FY11 Unreserved Fund Balance Projected at Deliberative \$210,000

Total FY11 Surplus Commitment Shortfall (\$15,100)

Also provided to Board Members was a copy of the Mont Vernon School District FY12 Revenue Summary. (Attachment C) This was passed out at the Deliberative Session. The Proposed FY12 MVVS Tax Rate was \$1.40.

Board members received a handout entitled Mont Vernon

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School District FY12 Revenue Summary with Proposed FY12 Pre-Buys. The tax rate could go from the proposed rate of \$1.40 to \$1.06. (Attachment D)

Also provided was the Mont Vernon FY12 Budget, Potential Operating Budget Reductions totaling \$20,500. The reductions were taken in Replacement in Equipment – Technology, co-Curricular Salaries – Science Camp, Travel, Conferences, Conventions – Admin. Support, Travel, Conferences, Conventions – Principal, Dues and Fees – Principal, Special Education Supplies, and Transportation – Field Trips. (Attachment E)

The board had a discussion to try to understand the current situation regarding adequacy aide and retirement. The School Board has the authority to spend/not spend the whole amount that was originally appropriated.

Bruce Schmidt asked what the cost would be to hold a special meeting. Betty Shankel said it would be very minimal for Mont Vernon.

Bill Archibald said if they used surplus from the 2010-2011 budget, he thinks the board will have a credibility issue. Bill said he thinks the voters would not be happy, if they use surplus funds.

Janet Gramatges said the Librarian is a valued position at the Village School and she would be very sad if the position were eliminated. She wants to see all the wonderful programs remain at the Village School.

John Quinlan said the Legislature passed its bill and it went on to the Senate. John said this will be a 2-year budget and what the Legislature is trying to do is soften the blow and stabilize. John said the Senate will moderate what the Legislature did even further. John said the best move for the board is to do absolutely nothing right now.

John said he thinks they should restore the Librarian position and renew the current Librarian's contract if they find they need funds he thinks the right thing to do is to

hold a special meeting, but he doesn't think it will come to that. John said legally and ethically, the town should decide what to do, and he thinks it will all work out okay.

Bruce said he agrees with John, he doesn't see the need to remove the librarian's position, he thinks it should be restored however, he doesn't agree with not spending excess funds should they be needed.

Bruce said the district has done a phenomenal job managing the funds really well. Bruce said should some of the excess funds be needed they should be used. Bruce said he thinks they should rescind their decision to not renew the Librarian position and use FY11 funds to procure items, which are needed to provide an adequate education at the Village School.

Trevor said he did not agree with using surplus funds. Trevor said he received an email from a person who asked him to read it however, he was not going to.

Trevor said unfortunately a lot of people don't show up to board meetings, Deliberative Session, etcetera however, the Default Budget was overwhelmingly voted in.

Trevor said he thinks they should keep the faith with the public and go with John's choice and try to minimize the cut backs to the school.

Trevor said he did not agree with Bruce's opinion on spending surplus funds.

Bruce said he is not worried about state politics, and Mont Vernon is at the bottom third statewide for spending per student.

Trevor said just because you spend more money, it doesn't necessarily mean a better education.

Bruce said by spending less, it doesn't equal a better education.

Tom Driscoll said he would be uncomfortable with cutting the Librarian position for the 2011-2012 School Year. Tom said since there is a surplus, the tax rate will be at or less what was voted on at the Deliberative Session. He said the voters and board had no idea the state was going to do what they are doing.

After a lengthy discussion, the board agreed they would restore the Librarian position and then renew the Librarians contract but take no further action this month.

Board members agreed the administration and board put through a lean budget but went to Default. They want to continue giving surplus back to the community.

Kim suggested the board give themselves another month to get feedback from the community, listen to people in the community.

- B. Nominations – **A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to restore the part time Librarian Position on staff at the Mont Vernon Village School. John Quinlan seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)**

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to nominate Amy White to continue to serve as Staff Librarian for the FY11-FY12 School Year. John Quinlan seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

Kim Roberge apologized for the decision at the last board meeting to not renew the staff librarian position due to the potential funding cuts by the Legislature significantly impacted the morale of the staff in the building. She said she has learned a lot over the past month as board chair and she hopes the morale will improve since the position has been restored.

Laurie Hayes said she had some budget questions for the board.

Betty Shankel commented based on questions from Laurie Hayes with regards to when revenue is reduced at the state level, there is an immediate impact on the tax rate but not an impact on the budget.

- C. FY11 Calendar: End of School - Board members received a handout in their board packets entitled Calendar Options SAU 39.

Dr. Jennings told board members the calendar options were presented at the SAU Board meeting. Since the last SAU Meeting, they had an additional snow day on April 1, 2011, bringing the total number of snow days to date to 7.

Dr. Jennings is proposing the last day of school for Mont Vernon be Friday, June 24, 2011, with an In-Service Day for Staff on Monday, June 27, 2011.

A motion was made by John Quinlan to make the last day of school for the Mont Vernon Village School, June 24, 2011. Tom Driscoll seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

- D. Policy FF: Dedication and Naming of Facilities:
Board members received a copy of policy FF – Dedication and naming of Facilities in their board packets.

Board members had no questions or comments on the policy.

A motion was made by Bruce Schmidt to approve Policy FF as presented. Trevor Girard seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0-0)

- A. Effects of Default Budget

1. FY12 Support Staff Raises – Board members had asked what was lost in the

VII. NOMINATIONS

Default Budget, and the support staff raises were lost. The amount of the raises was a total of \$3,035 (1% increase)

The board asked how many employees this represents and Betty said between 9 and 10 employees.

Kim Roberge told board members last year the support staff was given a 1.5% increase.

The board will discuss this topic again at the next board meeting.

2. Unfunded Initiatives – The board will be discussing this at the next board meeting. The administration is to bring a list of items to the board meeting in May.

B. Board Protocols: New Member – Dr. Jennings told board members at the next SAU Meeting an overview will be presented with regards to board protocols for old and new members.

Dr. Jennings explained the chain of command to new board member, Tom Driscoll.

Kim Roberge suggested the board decide how they want to address their board goals to present to the new Superintendent.

Bruce suggested at the end of each board meeting the board and administration review the action items that come out of the meeting for the next meeting.

IX. REVIEW OF MEETING/ADJOURN

A motion was made by John Quinlan to adjourn the meeting. Tom Driscoll seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m. (5-0-0)