



SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2007

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Present: Ginny Burley, Chair; Rob LaClair, Vice-Chair; Allen Gilbert, Clerk; Mark Berry, Susan Chickering, Stuart Savage, Tom Williams, Keith Gerritt, Principal; Tom McKone, HS Assistant Principal; Robbe Brook, Superintendent; Andrew Huckins-Noss and Alanna Webb, Student Representatives.

Also Present: Carole Freeman, Director of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction; Nancy Thomas, Assistant Superintendent; Senators Bill Doyle and Phil Scott, Representatives Pat McDonald and Peter Peltz, Mitch Golub, E.M.E.S. Principal; Bill Haines, Worcester Select Board; community members Leslie Haines, Jeff Rubin, Ed Deegan and Maureen Lawson, and Judy Bickford, U-32 faculty member.

- 1.0. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Chair, Ginny Burley.
 - 1.1. Ginny Burley welcomed guests and thanked legislators for attending and participating.
 - 1.2. Agenda Revisions – Stuart Savage noted that Tennis Court Proposal should be part of the discussion and/or action agenda.
 - 1.3. Public Comments and Correspondence – Ginny Burley opened discussion with legislators about current education issues. Discussion followed regarding many issues, including:
 - Representative Pat McDonald spoke about testimony that had been given earlier this day at the Capitol, and both Pat McDonald and Senator Bill Doyle commended Nancy Thomas on her presentation regarding special services.
 - Discussion of property tax rates, common level of appraisal, health insurance costs. Allen Gilbert spoke about the issue of the elementary schools and the district high school being combined in determining per pupil spending.
 - Senator Phil Scott spoke about school construction funding. Ginny Burley spoke about the value of Building and General Services and the need for school boards to rely on their expertise when undertaking large construction projects.
 - Discussion followed regarding the definition of “local control.” What is it and what do we really want it to mean?
 - Income tax versus property tax, or even some other tax mechanism to pay for education.
 - Bill Doyle asked about “No Child Left Behind” and its impact on U-32. Keith Gerritt replied to this in regards to the recent NECAP results. Discussion followed regarding “NCLB” and whether this initiative is appropriate for rural schools like Vermont’s.
 - Discussion followed regarding special services, e.g. the area of autism, how to serve the children, the discussion of moving to a “regional” resource center. More discussion of other “regional” concepts.
 - Some discussion followed regarding a common calendar and how it would positively affect professional development.
 - The proposal by Education Commissioner Cate to consolidate school districts was mentioned. One idea suggested was to provide an incentive for districts to participate in a pilot program.
- 2.0 Consent Agenda
 - 2.1 **Allen Gilbert moved and Mark Berry seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2007 special school board meeting. This motion carried unanimously.**
 - 2.2 **Allen Gilbert moved and Mark Berry seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2007 school board meeting. Discussion: Stuart Savage noted a couple points of clarification re: VSBA report to the board. Item 3.3 should read: “Stuart Savage brought a report on Public School costs, prepared by Vermont Business Round Table, and asked Keith Gerritt to provide copies to all board members. He also reports on statewide compliance with the “harassment statute,” also discussion underway regarding numerous emails from the Department of Education.” This motion carried unanimously, with corrections as noted.**
- 3.0 Reports to the Board
 - 3.1 WCSU – Rob LaClair stated that the Executive Committee is looking for input from boards regarding the role of the Executive Committee. This item will be included on a future agenda for discussion.
 - 3.2 Policy – Mark Berry reported on policies that are currently under discussion.
 - 3.3 Personnel – No report tonight.
 - 3.4 Co-Curricular – No report tonight.
 - 3.5 Facilities Report – No report tonight.
 - 3.6 Student Representatives’ Report – Andrew Huckins-Noss reported that he and Alanna Webb had attended a Student Council meeting and plan to attend one per month. He spoke about student concerns about Advanced Placement offerings and weighted grade point average for these courses. He stated that upperclassmen complain of not being able to fulfill their PE and Health requirements until their senior years, and by that time, the courses are not as relevant as they might have been in earlier years. Alanna Webb reported that many students have expressed an interest in having a sign at the entrance to the school that more prominently announces our school. She also reported on her attendance at the Governor’s Institute this past weekend.



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3.7 Administrator’s Report – Keith Gerritt reported that he had attended an informative legal seminar for School Administrators. He congratulated the middle school students on the 8th grade plays, and the 7th grade Lotus Lake winter outdoor activities. He reported briefly on the positive NECAP results; he noted that Carole Freeman will prepare a presentation for the board in March. Keith spoke about the idea of ongoing, or imbedded, professional development, specifically by instituting “late start” dates. Discussion followed regarding this issue; also how this might relate to the “common calendar” which was discussed earlier with the legislators. Board members agreed with the concept of imbedded professional development, but suggested options other than late starts, like half (or full) days scheduled on the day before vacations. Some board members felt that the late start days had resulted in the past in students taking the entire day off.

4.0 Discussion Agenda

4.1 Policy Reading – Local Action Plan G8 – moved for adoption.

4.2 Tennis Courts discussion – Stuart Savage opened discussion regarding this proposal and the tennis program’s dire need for courts. Stuart spoke about the Finance Committee’s and Facilities Committee’s discussions around this matter. Allen Gilbert spoke about the importance of the school board showing support for this proposal by committing some financial backing. Ed Deegan asked, if this is a community asset, and the community is going to use it, why isn’t U-32 asking for the towns’ support via a special article at Town Meeting, noting that it’s too late for this year.

Allen Gilbert moved and Rob LaClair seconded a motion that the board commit \$30,000 from the fund balance to support the construction of tennis courts at U-32. Discussion: Allen Gilbert stated that he felt confident that fundraising was going to be successful. Allen Gilbert also pointed out the \$5-10,000 expense every year of transporting tennis athletes to other facilities. The motion was amended to add, “contingent upon the balance being raised from other sources.” This motion carried unanimously, as amended. (Formal action will be warned and taken on February 21, 2007)

5.0 Action Agenda

5.1 **Mark Berry moved and Susan Chickering seconded a motion to adopt the Local Action Plan Policy – G8. This motion carried unanimously.**

5.2 **Tom Williams moved and Rob LaClair seconded a motion to set the tuition rate for U-32 at \$10,669.00 for fiscal year 2007-2008. This motion carried unanimously.**

5.3 **Stuart Savage moved and Rob LaClair seconded a motion to approve a tuition waiver for Trimester 3 for a foreign exchange student. Discussion followed. Stuart Savage confirmed that the administration recommends this waiver. This motion carried unanimously.**

5.4 **Tom Williams moved and Stuart Savage seconded a motion to approve the Equity Coordinator Contract. This motion carried unanimously.**

6.0 **Mark Berry moved and Allen Gilbert seconded a motion to approve the following board orders:**

January 23, 2007	\$1,315.00	Athletic Officials
January 29, 2007	\$920.00	Athletic Officials
February 6, 2007	\$695.00	Athletic Officials
February 7, 2007	\$26,543.53	Food Services
February 7, 2007	\$72,355.30	General

This motion carried unanimously.

7.0 Mark Berry moved and Allen Gilbert seconded a motion to go into executive session at 8:40 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel issues. The motion carried and the board entered executive session

Mark Berry moved and Allen Gilbert seconded a motion to come out of executive session. The motion carried and the board came out of executive session at 9:30 p.m.

8.0 Ideas for Future Agenda – Role of the Executive Committee.

9.0 Board Comments – Mark Berry recommended emailing board agendas and packets rather than mailing paper packets. Some discussion ensued regarding the ease of using laptops with “Wi-Fi.”

10.0 There being no further business, the board adjourned by consensus at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Stoudt
Board Recording Secretary