

STRAFFORD AND SHARON JOINT SCHOOL BOARD

SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 – 5:30 PM

THE NEWTON SCHOOL

DRAFT Minutes

Regular Strafford and Sharon Board Meetings to follow

In attendance: Strafford Board: Glenn Wylie, Erik Goodling, Hilary Linehan, Erik Reimanis  
Greg Bagnato- Newton Principal, Newton Staff: Denise Cote, Diane White, WRVSU Staff:  
Donna Benoit- Business Manager, Shirley Ferguson- Director Curriculum and Instruction, Deb  
Matthews, Director of Special Services (arrived 5:47 pm), Mark Kline- Director of Technology,  
Sharon Board: Steve Gagliardone, Karen Henderson, Don Shaw (arrived 5:46), Barrett Williams-  
Sharon Principal, Community Members: Michael Livingston, Matt Cardillo (arrived 5:46pm),  
Becky Proulx- Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order- Meeting called to order by Erik G at 5:35 pm
2. Adjustments to the Agenda- none
3. Consent Agenda- none
4. Public Comment- none
5. Reports to the Board
  - 5.1. Director Curriculum and Instruction's Report- Shirley reported that yesterday the PreK-12 706 study committee representatives had a day-long meeting and discussed what it would look like to have one high school and two middle schools. They worked with 2 consultants from Up for Learning. They spent the day getting to know each other and did some forward thinking. Students from the high schools, teachers, and HS principals attended. Penny Bishop from UVM will be there at the next meeting to help lead the conversation. They will prepare a report for the Boards when they are done with their meetings. September 26 is the next meeting for this group.
  - 5.2. Director of Special Service's Report- Deb Matthews reported that this is the time of year where there are lots of changes with students moving in and being assessed. Deb distributed and reviewed a handout for the primary roles and responsibilities of the Director, Assistant Direct of Special Services, Admin Assistant, and Medicaid Clerk. Deb distributed and reviewed the newly written, WRVSU Para Educator Manual. She is looking for feedback on the manual. The manual has not been vetted by the union.
  - 5.3. Technology Director's Report- Mark Kline, Director of Technology, reported that he began this summer. He has inventoried the technological supplies at all the schools. They have

created a ticket system for technology issues at all the facilities. This will help to track the problems, timing, and resolutions. They have also examined the Digital Learning Plan and done some streamlining of the plan. Don Shaw asked if they are looking at commonality of language. Mark stated that they are working on making sure the schools are utilizing the resources they have such as the Google suite of tools. He is looking forward to making sure that staff are comfortable with technology and are exposed to the technology that is available to staff and students. Mark presented the WRV Tech page on the WRVSU website. Mark spoke briefly about social media at different schools. Board discussed open meeting laws and social media.

## 6. Discussion Matters

6.1. Exploratory Conversations vs. Formal 706b Study Committee- Hilary reported on the 706 committee meeting that was held on 9/12/16. The conversations focused on operating a middle school or tuitioning middle school students and where (i.e., at which grade) elementary school ends and middle school begins. Discussion of k-5 vs k-6 model of elementary school. Steve G reported that Steve Dale asked the group to come to consensus regarding structure such as k-6. Don asked what Strafford's pleasure was regarding k-6 vs K-8. Hilary said that town surveys indicated a strong desire to keep the middle school in town. Steve G said that Tunbridge might go k-6, or possibly merge with Chelsea. Discussion about k-5. The K-12 706 study group is focusing on k-5. Hilary reported that representatives were supposed to go back to their boards and discuss what they really wanted. The two study committees (the K-6/8 study committee and the K-12 study committee) are very interlinked. A k-12 706 representative plans to attend the k-6/8 706 meetings. Hilary asked Sharon about the possibility of the Alternative Structure. Steve G said that he has asked Kathy to call another meeting. He reported that Sharon needs to examine the two options simultaneously leading up to town meeting. Steve G suggested that each town contribute money to help fund the alternative structure study, since there is no State funded mechanism to fund such a study under Act 46. Don suggested investigating one study to completion rather than investigating both at the same time. Steve asked about the downside of studying both options. Erik G said that at a Board of Ed meeting that he attended they passed the draft rules into the rulemaking process for alternative structures. He said the process can take up to 6 months. This document exists on the Board of Ed website. Discussion about alternative structure. There is no money for an Alternative Structure study grant under Act 46. Hilary asked the Board Chairs to contact the other Boards to ask about their participation.

## 7. Adjourn- Adjourned 6:42pm.

## Strafford School Board

In attendance: Strafford Board: Glenn Wylie, Erik Goodling, Hilary Linehan, Erik Reimanis  
Greg Bagnato- Newton Principal, Newton Staff: Denise Cote, Diane White, Donna Benoit-  
Business Manager, Becky Proulx- Recording Secretary.

### Action Items:

- 2.1.3 Greg will annotate calendar items on the Board calendar that are his responsibility.
- 6.1 Greg will communicate with the Coffin Trust regarding adjacent land.
- 7.1 Hilary will investigate how best practice weighed in the decision by the k-12 706 to choose k-5 (elementary school), 6-8 (middle school), and 9-12 (high school) in their delivery model.
- 8.5 Erik G will check on the agenda item "Employment Contract" and carry it forward to the next meeting if necessary.
- 9.2 Hilary will get Becky the dates of upcoming meetings.
- 9.2 Erik G will ask Liz to return the Thetford Academy Board report to a standing agenda item.

### Decisions Made:

- 3.1 Minutes of August 9, 2016 approved as amended.
- 6.1 Board approved a one-time expense of \$700 for a PreK coordinator.
- 8.1 Adopted the Look-alike weapons Policy.
- 8.2 Adopted the Transportation: Bus Breakdown-Accident/Emergency Response Policy.
- 8.3 Adopted the Board Relations with School Personnel Policy.
- 8.4 Adopted the Wellness Policy.
- 8.6 Board changed the Officially Adopted Meeting Locations for evening meeting to the Sharon Elementary School, Sharon on even numbered months and Newton School, Strafford on odd numbered months.

1. Call to Order- Erik G called the meeting to order at 6:49pm.
2. Adjustments to the Agenda- add the Thetford Academy Board Report  
Business Managers Reports
  - 2.1.1. FY16 Year End Financial Summary- Donna distributed the Preliminary FY15-16 Financial Summary. The year ended much better than projected. The school was down one para educator and a majority of the para work was SPED eligible. Other budget items that came in below projections were transportation, computer tech, etc. The audit is scheduled for the first week of October.
  - 2.1.2. FY17 Expenditure Report- Greg and Donna have met to look at things that she can project such as staffing. Donna has not seen tuition payments so she cannot project tuition. She will prepare another report in December.

2.1.3. Budget Timeline- the budget timeline is the same as previous years. Greg will annotate calendar items on the Board calendar that are his responsibility.

3. Consent Agenda

3.1. Minutes of August 9, 2016 (Regular Meeting). Motion (Hilary/Erik G) to approve the minutes as amended. Yeas: Hilary, Erik R, and Glenn, Abstained: Erik G Change to minutes- 6.1 principal's reports should say "Habits and Attitudes" instead of "Approach".

4. Board Communications-

4.1. Erik G received a letter from Paul Perkins regarding the VSBA and requesting that Strafford not belong to VSBA because their position is not in keeping with our current beliefs and actions. Erik G will respond to Paul on behalf of the Board. The Board believes that the VSBA does many things that are positive.

4.2. Erik G communicated with Jim Kenyon regarding his Valley News article. Discussion of article ensued.

4.3. Erik G received a letter from Rebecca Holcombe. Discussion of the letter at 7.2.

5. Public Comment- Denise Cote spoke about the Special Services for students at Newton. She has concerns that about the message that comes from the SU and the system of pieced-together services. She would like to Board to look at this going forward as the budgeting process begins. She would like to see more consistency to promote staff and student relationships. Erik G responded that he believes the changes that Denise spoke about were the result of centralization. Discussion about Special Services. Hilary suggested tracking these needs closely. Greg said that the plan is to look at this year's current needs. Hilary suggested that this communication come from the bottom up so that the information can get to the SU. Diane White agreed with Denise's comments. Discussion about how Special Services staff get allocated based on student records.

6. Reports to the Board

6.1. Principal's Report- Greg reported 114 students enrolled (3 more will begin attending Newton on October 1). We have received \$5000 in grant funding for outdoor education to fund professional development for 1-2 staff with VINS, and kindergarten forest day. The 6-8 team has worked with the Hulbert Outdoor Center and the 8<sup>th</sup> graders will go to Hulbert for 3 days and 2 nights later this fall. New staff are settling in well: Nils Fredland (Music), Beatrice Pratt (Spanish), Regan Tieff (Science), Charlene Leonard (Reading), Erin Masteller (Facilities Director), Michelle Pringle (Counselor), Gret Hewes (Food Service Director). Also a new OT and SLP. Erin reports that all toilets are replaced, painting in the cafeteria and science room are complete, and all systems are functioning. Hoping to replace the split rail fence. Looking for a water softener for the dishwasher. Staff are interested in a new play structure. Phase one of the Newton School building project, which was begun several years ago, is complete. The SU has asked Strafford to pay \$700 for a SU PreK coordinator. Greg recommends that the

Board approve the expense. Motion (Erik R) to approve a one-time expense of \$700 for a PreK coordinator. Yeas: Erik G, Glenn, Erik R, Nays: Hilary. Hilary believes that anticipated expenses should be included in the SU budget. Motion passed. The Board would like to know why this was brought to the Board instead of put in the SU budget. Greg updated the Board on about the use of the Coffin land. Greg will send communication to the Trust.

6.1.1. Request Funds for PK Admin at SU. See above.

6.2. Business Manager's Reports. See above.

6.3. Thetford Academy- Enrollment is ahead of schedule for this year and is projected to decline for next year due to two factors: a smaller class at Thetford Elem and declining enrollment throughout the State. They are looking into boarding students in the coming years. They have a new website. They are interested in recruiting Hanover and Norwich students. They are looking at changing their academic schedule. Their outdoor initiative is growing, but slowly so that it can be done well. They are designing a half day outdoor program, an alternative to a tech center, on campus.

## 7. Discussion Matters

7.1. Act 46 – Current Progress: Discussion about 706 and Alternative structure. If you are a necessary district the town is required to vote. If you are an advisory member a town-wide vote is not necessary. Erik G suggested that Strafford stay in the committee until the option of k-8 option is eliminated from the committee. Hilary asked if the k-12 committee looked at best practice when they decided on the structure of k-5 (elementary school), 6-8 (middle school), 9-12 (high school). Hilary will investigate this. The Alternative structure requires a self-evaluation. Hilary suggested a joint meeting with Thetford. Erik G is hoping to meet with Tim Briglin and Shannon soon. A proposal is due November 2017.

7.2. SU alignment vis a vis Secretary Holcomb's Letter: Erik G reported on the letter he received from Secretary Holcomb. Discussion about calendar and SU alignment.

7.3. Begin developing fixed costs estimate 2017-2018 Budget: Greg and Donna are working on that.

## 8. Actions Matters-

8.1. Report: Look-alike weapons Policy – 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Motion (Erik R) to approve as written. Policy unanimously adopted.

8.2. Report: Transportation: Bus Breakdown-Accident/Emergency Response Policy – 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Motion (Erik R) to approve as written. Policy unanimously adopted.

8.3. Report: Board Relations with School Personnel Policy – 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Motion (Erik R) to approve as written. Policy unanimously adopted.

8.4. Report: Wellness Policy – 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Motion (Erik R) to approve as written. Policy unanimously adopted.

8.5. Employment Contract- Erik G will check on this and carry forward to the next meeting.

8.6. Change Officially Adopted Meeting Locations- Motion (Hilary) to change every other meeting to Sharon Elementary School. The Board will meet in Sharon on even months and in Strafford on odd months. Passed unanimously.

9. Confirm Next Meeting Dates

9.1. October 11, 2016 – 5:30 PM at Sharon Elementary School

September 26, 2016- WRVSU board meeting 6pm at South Royalton School

October 6, 2016- K-6/8 706b Study Committee Meeting: 6pm at Tunbridge Elementary School (current listed location)

9.2. 706 meeting Hilary will get Becky the dates of upcoming meetings. Erik G will ask Liz to return the Thetford Academy Board report to a standing agenda item.

10. Future Agenda Items

11. Adjourn- Motion (Erik R) to adjourn. Unanimous.