

1 **Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District (SWVRTSD)**

2 **Finance Committee Meeting Minutes: June 16, 2005**

3 Conference Room, Career Development Center

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5 Board Members Present: Kevin Goodhue; Frank Lamb, Chair; Lance Matteson (left 6:00pm).

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7 Staff and Others Present: Bill Burfeind, Treasurer; Greg Lewis, Business Manager; Bob Marcoux,
8 SVSU Business Manager (left 5:40pm); Donna Oyama, Director; Cindy Palmer, Asst. Treasurer.

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10 Recorder: Richard Bump.

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13 Lamb called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

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15 1. Balance Sheet: Lewis distributed a SWVRTSD Balance Sheet, noting that the cash accounts
16 are included in the asset section of the report.
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18 2. Exit Interview with Outgoing Business Manager: Both Lamb and Matteson noted that Bob
19 Marcoux, retiring SVSU Business Manager, has served the CDC in several capacities over
20 the last several years, and then welcomed whatever thoughts and comments he may have
21 about future directions for the CDC. In response, Marcoux noted that because the CDC
22 employs its own Business Manager, day to day financial operations would continue to run
23 smoothly after his departure. Marcoux, however, did stress the following points
- 24 - CDC administration should continue to pursue the technical correction to Act 130,
25 which would separate all three local education budgets: the elementary district, the
26 MAU district, and the SWVRTSD district. By doing so, the state support grant
27 would be received directly by each district (without that correction, the SWVRTSD
28 budget is now included in the MAU budget, and MAU would receive CDC GSSG
29 funds as a pass through to the CDC). In subsequent discussion, members and
30 staff noted that there appears to be no one opposed to the correction, and that it
31 could go into effect as early as FY07. Marcoux also noted that the actual cost of
32 the CDC budget to each of the sending districts, when compared to the total
33 education budget for that sending district, is "tiny". The Bennington School District
34 total budget, for example, is over \$25M, and the CDC part of that cost is only
35 \$1.2M. Oyama noted that Anne Mook, local legislator, is on the State Education
36 Committee and is the logical contact on this issue. Oyama also noted that
37 Middlebury Technical Center is also supportive of the correction.
 - 38 - the SVSU and RGB boards need to be more clearly and formally aware of the
39 effectiveness and appropriateness of the on-going contractual arrangements made
40 with SVSU for supervisory services. Marcoux suggested that although the CDC is
41 a legally independent supervisory union, there is considerable confusion
42 nevertheless on the part of both SVSU and CDC staff (as well as the general
43 public) because the CDC shares so many contracts and services with the SVSU
44 (union contracts and personnel, as two of the most significant examples). Marcoux
45 also suggested that, if the relationship continues as it is currently structured, it
46 would be appropriate to have SWVRTSD representation on the SVSU board. In
47 subsequent discussion, members and staff noted that the SWVRTSD is, in fact,
48 larger than the SVSU district, and that the interests of the non-SVSU districts
49 within SWVRTSD need to be more clearly heard. Marcoux also noted that even
50 administrators in Montpelier are confused about the SVSU/SWVRTSD
51 arrangements, in that he was asked recently by Vermont officials to report on the
52 audit of the CDC Perkins grant. Palmer also noted that the CDC was seen as a
53 "shining star" during the recent community dialogue and report process developed
54 by the Education Task Force. In concluding comment, everyone agreed that there
55 should be greater effort communicating the fact that the SWVRTSD is an institution
56 entirely independent of the SVSU and that the SWVRTSD has all the rights and

1 prerogatives of an independent school district.
2 Marcoux also commented in general about the governance structure of the SVSU, noting
3 that from a professional point of view, it would be most effective if the SVSU became a
4 single unified district, but from a personal point of view, there are several areas of concern
5 (local teaching practices, curriculum development, etc). Marcoux also noted that should the
6 CDC become, for example, included in that single district, there would be a probable loss of
7 local planning and strategizing.
8 In response to a question from Matteson, Marcoux noted that in order to increase math and
9 science skills, hands-on instruction in these two areas must begin in the lower grades, and
10 further suggested that the *No Child Left Behind* legislation may actually be detracting from
11 this effort. In closing discussion, Marcoux commended the CDC for its success in general,
12 and in particular, for the manner in which his second son was successfully counseled, taught
13 and guided by CDC staff while a student at the CDC. Members thanked Marcoux for his
14 thoughtful services over the years to the CDC.
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16 3. Activity Accounts: Lewis distributed and then briefly reviewed a spreadsheet listing each of
17 the Activity Accounts, the funds included in each account, and the purpose for which each
18 account is used. Lewis also noted that all accounts are held at the Bennington County
19 Credit Union. Activity Accounts described included
20 - Adult Education Fund: receives evening tuitions which are then used to fund
21 salaries for evening instructors, books, advertising, etc
22 - 'regular' Activity Accounts which are set up for most of the CDC programs.
23 Lewis also noted that the program director is in charge of his/her program account, and that
24 appropriate documentation is developed, submitted and reviewed for deposits and
25 disbursements from these accounts. Members and staff further noted that
26 - account activity and balances are held on Excel spreadsheets managed by CDC
27 staff and are reconciled on a monthly basis to bank statements
28 - checks are written and drawn against these accounts by CDC staff and with an
29 appropriate separation of duties
30 - policy #3110 defines the creation and use of Activity Accounts.
31 In subsequent discussion, members and staff noted that although the teachers determine
32 fundraising efforts and the ways in which those funds are then used, the CDC Director
33 appears to be the person ultimately responsible for proper control of funds deposited into
34 and withdrawn from these funds. Members also agreed that a report (to the Finance
35 Committee? to the full board?) on an intermittent but regular basis (quarterly? annually?)
36 describing funds raised and used for each account would be of value, and would also satisfy
37 the fiscal oversight responsibility of board members (although these are not taxpayer-raised
38 dollars). Members also noted that they did not want to micro-manage these accounts. In
39 response to a recommendation from Burfeind, Lewis agreed to research whether or not the
40 activity accounts are using a different tax identification number than the accounts used to
41 hold public funds. Given that the activity funds appear to be private funds and therefore
42 would not qualify as tax exempt funds, the Tax ID number should be different.
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44 4. Travel/Conference Procedures: Lewis distributed a document describing policy and
45 procedures related to employee travel and attendance at conferences and workshops.
46 Members tabled action on this document until the next meeting.
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48 5. Minutes: Goodhue moved and Lamb seconded a motion to approve the Minutes of May 12,
49 2005, and the motion passed unanimously.
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51 6. Other:
52 a. *Time Sheets*: Palmer respectfully requested that staff time sheets be submitted on a
53 more regular and frequent basis, such as every two weeks. Palmer reported that it is
54 difficult to confirm time sheets when the information presented may be as much as two
55 months old.
56 b. *Board Sandwiches*: In response to a comment by Palmer about the high cost of

1 sandwiches and other food prepared for and offered to board members and staff during
2 extended board meetings, Oyama noted that the CDC Office Manager is trying to locate
3 a less expensive vendor, but also noted that the current vendor delivers the food
4 directly to the CDC. Lamb noted that the committee would take the issue under
5 advisement and also suggested that one solution to the delivery problem would be to
6 have a board member pick up the food on the way to the meeting.

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8 At 6:15pm, Goodhue moved and Lamb seconded a motion to adjourn, and the motion passed
9 unanimously.

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