

1 Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District (SVRTSD)

2 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, Thursday, December 3, 2015 4 PM

3 RGB members present-Jim Boutin, Fran Kinney, Rickey Harrington, Jim Boutin, Leon
4 Johnson and Ed Letourneau. John MacDonald arrived at 4:44 PM, Jackie Kelly at 5:05 PM

5 CDC represented by Supt./Dir. Mike Lawler, Asst. Dir. Meg Honsinger, Asst Dir. Adult
6 Education, Marie Pierre Huguet and Business Manager, Stephanie Mulligan

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8 Recorder: Sandra Redding

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10 Meeting commenced at 4:10 PM with Supt. Lawler sharing a very nice thank you email
11 from MAUMS concerning the 8th grade tours. He provided a printout of some of the
12 fascinating comments made by the 8th graders. This was enjoyed by all. The tours were
13 quite successful from all angles. Tom Pasternack, guidance coordinator, as well as
14 faculty and staff participated to create an interesting experience for the young students.
15 This year, 8th graders were escorted to MAU before their departure for more info
16 concerning signing up for classes. Many students indicated their interest in specific CDC
17 programs.

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19 Mike informed the committee that since the previous finance committee meeting, the
20 administrative staff has been working quite diligently on keeping the FY 2017 budget in
21 line. He feels that they are very close to achieving the very low increase to the budget that
22 would work for this year. The goal is to stay as close as possible to the present tuition rate
23 with only a very small increase in tuition, if necessary, and overall budget maintenance
24 as possible. We had a slight decrease in FTEs this year due to several circumstances.
25 Taking these things into consideration along with insurance increases, contract
26 requirements and organizational changes, the effort to keep the budget at reasonable
27 levels is a very difficult job. That is why the FTE count and how many students we serve
28 are extremely important as we go forward in creating the best environment for our
29 students. Faculty and administration are working to provide quality education without
30 adding too much to the financial burden for our sending communities. We are keeping
31 costs low, we are not sure of salary assistance from the state and we need to continue our
32 review of programs. We are looking at more flexible programming, re-defining courses,
33 scheduling conflicts, duplication of courses and graduation credits. All of these issues
34 complicate how we fill seats here at the CDC. We have a potential of two hundred more
35 spaces to be filled by students as we are presently configured. Only 10 additional FTEs
36 would assist in helping our budget stabilize. Mike reports he and MAU principal, Glenda
37 Cresto, have had several great discussions helping to build stronger ties between MAU
38 and the CDC. Also, members of the CDC administration along with MAU security and
39 Bennington Police Department officers attended a safety meeting in Montpelier as we
40 strive to fully protect CDC faculty, staff and students.

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42 Administration would like to make the following suggestions:

- 43 • Need \$77,000 in program reductions-teachers have been very reasonable this year
44 with their requests; no programs will suffer too badly
- 45 • Do not fund an Engineering position for the coming year-possibly add it another
46 year when other changes in that cluster may be forthcoming; find other options in
47 how engineering could be presented such as work based learning, VTL online and
48 personal participation
- 49 • Delay adoption of Infomatics Program as it would not be fiscally responsible to do
50 at this time when a budget crunch is apparent; need a fairly large sum of money to
51 start up, so a Perkins Grant would be the preferable way to go; Innovation grants
52 may not be available to us for a while, so further research is needed
- 53 • CDC office structure is being evaluated for streamlining; possible reduction in
54 hours for some staff with least amount of impact overall; looking at various
55 scenarios
- 56 • Business manager position needs to return to a fulltime job; present business

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- manager doing a great job, but so much more work now needs to be done in the human resources segment; can't get all work done in a .6 position
- Payoff final lease amount on backhoe so we own it outright
 - Roof repairs and other major improvements-general discussion on best way to handle these large scale repairs and from what account should they be taken; we know we need roof work done this year and possibly for several more years as we are dealing with an aging building; culinary may need work done on the fire suppression system
 - Considering the purchase of a new bus; may need to replace or add more vans for transportation of students
 - Discussion of where money can and/or should be taken from to cover certain larger expenses
 - Expansion of building trades in the coming years
 - Discussion of equipment and the wear/tear issues on them; auto program does a great job in keeping vehicles/equipment up and running; some repairs must be done by specialists, such a dozer repair

Mike was asked what he sees helping him suggest a brighter road ahead for the CDC. He responded:

- There's nothing huge that he sees as positive reinforcement for a better time ahead for the CDC. What he notes are several smaller areas that may be helpful, such as:
 - Offer classes differently, may be short blocks could run all year
 - Perhaps 7-12th grade PLP career path could include CDC class
 - Work on the legislature to allow us to offer after school and summer programs/classes for pay; right now, law does not allow this
 - Flexible pathways-include Sean-Marie Oller in discussions
 - Re-consider how we enroll students and what we allow them to take for programs/classes based on their age and previous courses studied
 - Think ahead to possible re-design of clusters, such as the engineering/design/fabrication/technology areas
 - Help counsellors understand and see the vision for the future; create marketing strategies and products

Mike noted the outstanding job Tom Pasternack is doing as he outreaches to our sending schools. Tom is doing an amazing job building firm bridges and strong relationships out in our district. Rickey Harrington mentioned that Mike is doing a great job for our school as well.

This meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM.