

Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District

Special Board Meeting

June 28, 2005

Attendance: Lance Matteson, Chair, Brian Doxsee, Vice Chair, (came in at 5:30 p.m.), Claude DeLucis, Frank Lamb, Jon Peaslee, Bob Burgess, Edward LeTourneau, Jr., Kevin Goodhue, Wes Knapp, Superintendent, Donna Oyama, Director.

Absent: Leon Johnson, Jean Bacon

The meeting began at 5:06 p.m.

Nomination Committee

Lance Matteson opened the Special Meeting by suggesting that the board appoint as our Nominations committee Frank Lamb, Claude DeLucia, and community member Donald Wilson. It was explained by Matteson that the Nomination Committee will screen possible new members to fill vacant board seats. Kevin Goodhue made the motion to appoint Frank Lamb, Claude DeLucia, and Donald Wilson as the Nomination Committee. Claude DeLucia seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Next Matteson explained the two new contracts to be approved. They are for the Business Manager and the Adult Services Coordinator. He mentioned that the negotiations committee decided it was not necessary to have a lengthy contract as are the other bargaining unit contracts. A termination clause was added to these contracts stating that a 30 day notice must be given by the employee to terminate the agreement.

The first contract for discussion and approval was the business manager.

Business Manager Contract

Jon Peaslee objected to the maximum of 190 sick days reimbursed at substitute pay clause saying that administrators only get a maximum of 50 percent of 180/190 (?) days. Matteson said the 190 sick days was at the substitute rate of \$70 per day, not the business manager's per diem. Frank Lamb pointed out that teachers get up to 180 days of cumulated sick days. Peaslee continued to state his disapproval of the wording (190 sick days) no matter what the rate of compensation as being excessive. After additional discussion, Matteson asked for a motion to approve the business manager contract as proposed. Jon Peaslee made the motion and Frank Lamb seconded the motion. The motion passed with 5 yes votes and 2 no votes.

### Adult Services Coordinator Contract

Matteson asked if there was a motion to approve the Adult Services Coordinator contract. Peaslee stated he had the same objections to the 190 sick day provision as with the business manager. Peaslee made the motion to approve the Adult Services Coordinator contract as proposed, Lamb seconded the motion. The motion passed with 6 yes votes and 1 no vote.

### Teacher Contract

Kevin Goodhue recused himself from participating in the discussion and vote on the teacher contract as a member of his family is a teacher.

Matteson mentioned that he had not seen the contract until just before the special meeting tonight. He explained that it was his understanding that the large items have been agreed upon. The salary and insurance were the last two large issues settled. Matteson stated that Mike Lockner, BSD representative and negotiations chair, indicated there were a few last minute language changes or technical corrections. Board members voiced their concern that they did not get copies of the contract until asked to vote on it the same day.

Wes Knapp said he received his copy of the contract on Friday afternoon. He and Mike Lockner reviewed the language and discovered Section 29.33 was added. Knapp said this was the first time he had heard about that section. It involved only the high school block schedule and he did not support this provision that took away the power of administration to make changes in scheduling and gave it to teachers or an arbitrator if there was no agreement within 30 days of notification. Matteson stated that this provision could potentially affect the CDC scheduling because we are locked into a time schedule by the State regulations.

When asked what percent teachers would pay towards their insurance, Matteson and Knapp stated it was 12.5 percent for 2006 and 15 percent for 2007, that is, a two and one-half percent increase for each year.

Knapp stated the salary increases included the steps. This is different from past years, he said. Retro checks would be given to teachers on July 21. Knapp stated that most teachers would not get a retro check as they are already receiving their step increase this year. The retro checks would affect teachers on the top step because the contract added a step for them. It would also affect retiring teachers' pensions as their salary would be increased.

Matteson stated there were two technical corrections to be made: Section 29.4 and 29.33. There is no longer a formal day for teachers to prepare their classrooms but teachers were still expected to have the rooms ready by the start of school. Brian Dorse said he didn't feel the draft was a final copy and he didn't want to vote on a contract that was still being negotiated. Matteson said legal council was doing some language corrections. Matteson stated that if the boards agree to the contract then retro pay can be paid to teachers out of this year's funds and chances are the negotiating team may want to start from scratch on a new contract if it is not approved.

Knapp stated that except for 29.33, all SVSU negotiators agreed with the contract. 29.33 involved the MAUHS block scheduling and board and administration objected to an arbitrator deciding what the high school schedule would be. Knapp stated that Norm Bartlett of the teachers' union suggested 29.33 be taken out of the contract by all Boards, although Bartlett also stated that the negotiators and Norm had agreed upon it from the beginning of negotiations. Knapp said he didn't remember that.

Knapp stated MAU Board approved the contract minus Section 29.33 and that BSD will vote on Wednesday and the other boards after that. Matteson asked who would make a motion to approve the teachers contract as proposed, subject to four conditions: 1) teachers agree to contract terms; 2) add agreed language to Section 29.4 regarding the work year and classroom preparation; 3) Section 29.33 be deleted; 4) technical corrections by both legal council is agreed upon by all parties.

Lamb asked if we can have a tentative agreement and vote later. It was mentioned that a tentative vote is not a binding vote and is not legal. Knapp said Norm Bartlett, NEA teacher negotiator and SVSU negotiator agreed to take out Section 29.33 and then boards could vote on the contract. Then if teachers agree, okay. If teachers do not vote yes on the contract, then the contract is void.

The amount of retro was again discussed. The deadline for contract ratification is midnight, June 30, 2005 regarding the fiscal year complications as to retroactive pay.

Knapp asked why would the RGB Board care if MAU deletes an item (29.33). Bob Burgess said he had an aversion to passing a contract under stress conditions. Burgess asked how many jurisdictions have to vote on the contract. Peaslee said eight boards have to vote on the contract.

Knapp said page 39 of the contract, Section 29.33, only pertains to the MAUHS. They are the only school affected by it. There are more schools and teachers who are not affected by Section 29.33. Matteson asked Knapp "Do you recommend we approve the teachers' contract as proposed?" Knapp said he recommends approval with the deletion of Section 29.33 and the addition of 29.4. Matteson and the board members worked on the wording of the motion. The motion was to approve the draft teachers' agreement as proposed with the deletion of Section 29.33 and the addition of the agreed language for Section 29.4. Doxsee reminded the board they have to vote yes or no-- there cannot be a tentative vote. Knapp said voting no would be a public relations problem; staff morale problem; a public perception problem for new hires and appearance of working with a difficult board. It took a lot of hard work to get to this point, he said.

Matteson suggested the above wording of the motion.

Burgess asked, "What are the alternatives?" Knapp said the board can start negotiations all over again. Not passing this contract will hurt the retirees and teachers at the top step.

They will lose the increase and cannot use it towards their retirement. DeLucia asked when teachers vote. Knapp and Peaslee said June 29.

There was much discussion as to the legality of the vote; the effect of not voting and going back to the drawing board. Matteson encouraged the board to pass the contract even though it was messy.

Peaslee made a motion "I move that we approve the agreed draft teachers' contract as recommended by Wes Knapp, with Paragraph 29.33 being deleted and with the prepared language provided by Wes Knapp regarding the school year and classroom preparation being added." DeLucia seconded the motion. There was a call for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Doxsee said after the vote, if teachers do not agree to the changes, he will be very reluctant to agree to any contract that is not in final form.

Meeting adjourned at 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Donna Oyama