

1 **Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District (SWVRTSD)**
2 **Regional Governing Board Meeting Minutes: April 8, 2013**

3 Assembly Room, Career Development Center
4

5 Members Present: Gloria Alexander; Jim Boutin; Kevin Goodhue; Jessica Gulley-Ward;
6 Rickey Harrington; Leon Johnson; Fran Kinney; Ed Letourneau; Heidi Pickering.
7

8 Members Absent: Katie Bourn
9

10 Staff and Others Present: James Culkeen; Barb Gorbaty; Marie-Pierre Huguet; Wendy
11 Klein; Mike Lawler; Greg Lewis; Bob Montgomery; Dawson Raspuzzi; Sandra Redding;
12 Kathy Slade; Bill Swisher.
13

14 Videotaping: CAT-TV
15

16 Recorder: Barb Schlesinger
17

18 **Call to Order/ Welcome**

19 Boutin called the meeting to order at 6:30pm, welcomed all and noted a quorum was
20 present.
21

22 **Public Comments**

23 Barb Gorbaty spoke of the Tech English course she teaches, which elimination is an action
24 item on tonight's agenda. She reminded the board that it was an important decision and
25 that NEASC calls for data to be used when adding/ dropping a program. Gorbaty noted the
26 course meets the common core standards with the exception of teaching Shakespeare, the
27 numbers indicate it pays for itself, and that the class is important for students transitioning to
28 the work place in that 63% of graduating MAU students are not proficient in writing and 26%
29 are not proficient in reading. She also noted the course allows sending school students a
30 required graduation credit and uses their time well.
31

32 Gorbaty asked why the recommendation was made other than it was the 'least damaging'
33 course to cut. There is no solid data to back the decision. She also spoke of the 39%
34 turnover with four instructors resigning, one position being cut to halftime and one instructor
35 who did not receive a letter. Gorbaty suggested trust and leadership become immediate
36 priorities of the director. Boutin responded the matter would be discussed during action
37 items.
38

39 Klein noted the effect the elimination of the class would have on sending school students
40 and the importance of literacy and communication skills. Klein voiced her support of
41 Gorbaty and suggested the board might better leverage her talents to all students in the
42 center rather than eliminating her position.
43

44 Slade expressed that cutting Tech English would have an adverse effect on students; there
45 has been an increase in the non-MAU student population, the ones who take this course,
46 and we will lose these students if the course is cut.
47
48
49

1 **Committee Reports**

2 - Strategic Planning

3 Alexander noted the minutes of the April 3 meeting were in the drop box. Reported
4 was that the community is hosting an Economic Development meeting, the
5 Bennington Select Board wants to meet with the MAU and CDC school boards and
6 at this point, the committee will hold off on its upcoming Community Night and send
7 representatives to the Town Forum in mid-May.

8
9 - Education

10 The committee will speak tonight at the Action Item segment.

11
12 - Finance

13 There was no report.

14
15 - Policy

16 There was no report.

17
18 **Consent Agenda**

19 **Minutes**

- 20 - Minutes of the March 18, 2013 Regional Governing Board Meeting

21
22 **Harrington moved and Kinney seconded the motion to accept the March 18, 2013**
23 **minutes. Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** Boutin noted the
24 motion passed. There was no discussion.

25
26 **Warrants**

- 27 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 20 3/29/2013 in the amount of \$ 805.88
28 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 1036 3/29/2013 in the amount of \$ 80,753.59

29
30 **Harrington moved and Johnson seconded the motion to approve Payroll Warrants**
31 **# 20 and # 1036. Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** Boutin
32 noted the motion passed. There was no discussion.

- 33
34 - SWVRTSD Vendor Warrant # 1037 3/29/2013 in the amount of \$ 86,426.92
35 - SWVRTSD Vendor Warrant # 1038 4/08/2013 in the amount of \$ 24,340.94

36
37 **Harrington moved and Johnson seconded the motion to approve the Vendor**
38 **Warrants. Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** Boutin noted the
39 motion passed. There was no discussion.

40
41 **Cash Flow Statement** (March 1 through March 31, 2013)

42 Boutin called for comments and heard none.

43
44 **Revenue & Expenses**

45 Boutin called for comments and heard none.

1 **Action Items**

2
3 ➤ **Resignations**

4 Culkeen summarized the resignation letters and gave a brief synopsis of each
5 position. He further noted the resignations were prompted in part by the Offer of
6 Employment letter sent March 15, 2013, which allows 15 days for response.
7

8 ~ Lisa Eames-Buchanan Office staff Effective March 28, 2013
9

10 **Kinney moved and Harrington seconded a motion to accept the resignation of Lisa**
11 **Eames-Buchanan. Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** There
12 was no discussion.

13
14 ~ Andrew Hunt PT Law Enforcement Effective close of school yr
15

16 **Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to accept the resignation of Andrew**
17 **Hunt. Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** There was no
18 discussion.

19
20 ~ Richard Kretzschmar PT Tech Two week notice
21

22 **Kinney moved and Goodhue seconded a motion to accept the resignation of Richard**
23 **Kretzschmar. Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** There was
24 no discussion.

25
26 ~ Michael J Galbraith Culinary Arts Instructor Effective close of school yr
27

28 **Johnson moved and Kinney seconded a motion to accept the resignation of Michael**
29 **John Galbraith. Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** There was
30 no discussion.

31
32 ~ Addie VanDeurzen Engineering/ CAD Instructor Effective close of school yr
33

34 **Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to accept the resignation of Addie**
35 **VanDeurzen. Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** There was
36 no discussion.

37
38 ➤ **Staff Reductions**

39 Culkeen noted he was charged by the board to scour the budget for money to apply
40 towards an Instructor for a reinstated Ag Program. With current Business Manager
41 Greg Lewis retiring, the opportunity exists to recreate the position for Mr Lewis's
42 replacement as a half-time (.5) position. This decision, changing the position to .5,
43 was based on both the Schiller Report (which called for elimination) and a business
44 office efficiency study conducted this winter (which recommended the position be
45 part-time or contracted out). Culkeen recommends that, based on the volume of the
46 work, the size of payroll and the size of the warrants, the position be 2% to 2.5% of
47 the budget versus the current 4%.
48

1 Brief discussion as to moving the current assistant into the position, advertising the
2 position, contracting out, and a draft revised/ new job description and ad being
3 brought to the board.
4

5 **Harrington moved and Kinney seconded the motion that the Business Manager**
6 **position become .5 time at the beginning of the next fiscal year. Hand vote was taken**
7 **with all in attendance voting in favor.** Boutin noted the vote was unanimous.
8

9 Boutin also commended Lewis for his offer to help with the transition.
10

11 ➤ **Program Reductions**

12 Tech English

13 Culkeen explained that in keeping with his task to cut/ reposition funds in the budget,
14 he is recommending Tech English be cut based on the low enrollment numbers for
15 both Tech English I and II (October 2012 enrollment was 12 students; March 2013
16 enrollment was 18 students – average FTE 3.75) and the minimal impact the cut
17 would have on the Tech Center.
18

19 Class enrollment has declined over the past four years: 2010 (42 students), 2011 (43
20 students), 2012 (24 students) and 2013 (18 students). The October 2012 student
21 count (12) reflects 3 MAU and 9 sending school students.
22

23 Culkeen asked the board to decide if we should have the program or channel the
24 savings to fund other programs.
25

26 **Harrington moved and Kinney seconded the motion to cut the Tech English program.**
27

28 Thorough, and at times heated, discussion followed with the majority of the board
29 participating, and Wendy Klein and Kathy Slade contributing. Areas covered
30 included technical English being available to all students (as it was in the past) as a
31 collaborative effort such as math is now, why the decline in enrollment (?), pulling
32 students out of class as opposed to the instructor going to them, Culkeen's task of a
33 list of reductions, tabling the motion temporarily in an effort to increase enrollment,
34 tasking the Superintendent with a job and then ignoring his recommendations, how will
35 the students get what they are suppose to have (?), Perkins grants used as funding
36 for pilot programs, a request to see the Tech English syllabus, throwing the
37 Superintendent under the bus, loss of students to existing programs when a new
38 program is started, and the loss of students (and subsequent loss of money) from
39 sending schools if Tech English is not provided.
40

41 Boutin bulleted the discussion by noting:

- 42 ▪ The Superintendent was asked through the Education Committee for
43 recommendations
- 44 ▪ The Education Committee has been discussing reviving the Ag program for
45 awhile
- 46 ▪ The Superintendent has done his work and come up with a list of reductions;
47 Tech English is on the list
- 48 ▪ Tech English is valuable, but its numbers are declining; look at and maybe offer
49 in a different way

1 **Hand vote was taken with Harrington, Johnson, Kinney and Pickering (4) voting in**
2 **favor, Alexander, Goodhue and Letourneau (3) voting against and Gulley-Ward (1)**
3 **abstaining.** Boutin announced the motion carried.

4
5 **Director/ Superintendent's Report**

6 Culkeen:

- 7 ▪ The Forestry program's air compressor needs to be replaced. Recommended
8 replacement is at 8K hours, the compressor has 12K hours now. The cost to CDC
9 will be \$11,600; \$17,000 is being received from Efficiency Vermont.
- 10
- 11 ▪ A RFB for a replacement used mini van had been written with Lewis and a report
12 came back Friday. Used is the operative word, it is a 'moving target' because of
13 changes in availability. This item was not warned as an action item.

14

15 The mini-van is used daily for both Coop runs and student transportation to and from
16 Grace Christian. CDC has two mini vans; the one needing replacement is the
17 donated 1999 Dodge Caravan. Tom Haskins (Automotive Instructor) recommends
18 the 2013 Caravan.

19

20 Discussion as to where the money would come from (Lewis noted there are 'pockets
21 of money' which when combined reflects \$119,610), bid specs (7 passenger, model
22 year 2011/ 2012, and mileage less than 25K), www.publicsurplus.com, state statute
23 requiring expenditures over \$15,000 to be voted on, the desire to hear about this
24 before the fact, and further explanation of the 'pockets of money' (monies budgeted
25 for but not used because of changes, ie assistant director/ law enforcement change).

26

27 **Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to approve the purchase. Hand vote**
28 **was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** Boutin announced the vote passed.

- 29
- 30 ▪ Distributed a handout (*Program Enrollment/ FTE count reporting to Dept of*
31 *Education on April 15, 2013*) which breaks out the March 15, 2013 enrollment
32 numbers by class and student sex as requested. This report will be discussed at the
33 May 2013 meeting and also be put in the drop box.
- 34
- 35 ▪ Distributed an email from Kathy Slade which reported the gold, silver and bronze
36 medal winners at the recent VT SkillsUSA competition. Slade reported that eighteen
37 students competed, winning a total of eight 'Golds'. These gold medal winners will
38 be invited to attend the Nationals in Kansas City, June 24 -29.
- 39
- 40 ▪ Spoke of the Sophomore Summit and Career Week. Klein noted the Summit is in its
41 ninth year and will be held April 11th at Bennington College. The premise of the
42 Summit is career exploration for 10th graders. It is a county-wide event in which
43 many CDC instructors participate. To date 241 students are pre-registered for the
44 one-hour workshops. Gorbaty and her students were thanked for their involvement
45 in Career Week.

46

47 **Chairman's Report**

- 48 ▪ Boutin addressed the vacancy created by Corcoran's resignation as board member
49 announced at last month's meeting. Boutin noted the by-laws are specific as to what

1 to do. Letourneau noted the by-laws require a Nomination Committee. Boutin
2 named Kinney and Johnson to act as the Nomination Committee and further
3 requested board members to funnel their suggestions and referrals to them. Kinney
4 and Johnson will bring these names and brief bios of those interested to the May
5 meeting.

- 6
- 7 ■ Boutin noted a draft Letter of Response to Barb Gorbaty was in the drop box.
- 8
- 9 ■ Boutin reminded the board of tomorrow evening's board training session at 5:00pm
10 in the CDC Assembly Room. Culkeen has handled the registration for the board and
11 all but 1 member is scheduled to attend.
- 12

13 **Executive Session**

14
15 **At 7:50pm Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to enter Executive Session**
16 **to discuss Personnel. All were in favor.**

17
18 **At 8:15pm Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to exit Executive Session.**
19 **All were in favor.**

20
21 No action was taken.

22 23 **Adjournment**

24 **At 8:16pm Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to Adjourn. All were in**
25 **favor.**

26 27 **Attachments:**

- 28 - Minutes of the March 18, 2013 Regional Governing Board Meeting
- 29 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 20 & # 1036
- 30 - SWVRTSD Vendor Warrant # 1037
- 31 - SWVRTSD Vendor Warrant # 1038
- 32 - Revenue & Expenses, Statement of Cash Flow
- 33 - Notice of Resignation(s): Eames-Buchanan, Hunt, Kretzschmar, Galbraith,
34 VanDeurzen
- 35

36 **Distributed at Meeting**

- 37 - Slade email regarding VT SkillsUSA results
- 38 - Culkeen's *Program Enrollment/ FTE count reporting to Dept of Education on April 15,*
39 *2013*