

1 **Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District (SWVRTSD)**  
2 **Regional Governing Board Meeting Minutes: December 21, 2015**

3 Assembly Room, Career Development Center

4 Online: <http://global.gotomeeting.com/join/983724493>

5 Phone: toll free (US) 1-877-309-2070: access code 983-724-493

6  
7 Members Present: Gloria Alexander; Jim Boutin; Jessica Gulley-Ward; Leon Johnson;  
8 Jackie Kelly; Fran Kinney; Ed Letourneau; John MacDonald.

9  
10 Members Absent: John Gauthier; Rickey Harrington; Heidi Pickering

11  
12 GoTo Meeting Attendees: Lynda Jackson, SREB

13  
14 Call In Attendees: None this evening

15  
16 Staff and Others Present: Meg Honsinger; Marie-Pierre Huguet, Superintendent Michael  
17 Lawler, Stephanie Mulligan

18  
19 Videotaping: CAT-TV

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21 Recorder: Barb Schlesinger

22  
23 **Call to Order/ Welcome**

24 Chairman Boutin called the December 21, 2015 Regional Governing Board meeting to order  
25 at 6:32, extended a welcome and noted a quorum was present.

26  
27 Boutin then noted the following changes to the Agenda regarding a) the order in which  
28 Committee Reports would be given: first would be Finance (budget), second would be  
29 Education/ Facilities and third to be Policy and b) Public Comments would be called for after  
30 Lynda Jackson's presentation.

31  
32 **SREB**

33 Lynda Jackson, Director of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), attended the  
34 meeting as a GoTo attendee. She gave a brief history of SREB highlighting its beginning in  
35 1948 through the 2006 Trade Centers That Work (TCTW), when the northern states of  
36 Vermont, New Hampshire and New York came on board.

37  
38 Turning to PowerPoint, she elaborated on TCTW's five priority areas and their associated  
39 key practices:

- 40 1. Improvement of overall quality (high expectations, career/ technical studies, Work  
41 Based Learning (WBL), academic studies/ actively engaged students)
- 42 2. Provide guidance and counseling
- 43 3. Provide support with academics and transitions (imbedded math and reading)
- 44 4. Work with sending schools
- 45 5. Support of a leadership culture of continuous improvement.

46  
47 She spoke then of Sustainable Improvement, which requires the support of leaders,  
48 students and teachers to be in harmony.

1 To date, SREB has provided:

- 2 \* A site visit, when teachers were introduced to the eighteen indicators evaluation tool
- 3 for high quality career tech education (CTE).
- 4 \* A site development workshop which involved taking stock of the advisory
- 5 committees, WBL, project-based learning, enrollment / retention and attendance. As
- 6 a result, the staff's consensus was to write a plan for both WBL and recruitment/
- 7 retention.
- 8 \* A community luncheon, the purpose of which was to ascertain the current needs and
- 9 concerns of business, industry and the community.
- 10 \* Leadership training, ie how to deal with change and steps to its implementation.
- 11 Implementation is achieved by Focus Teams which focus on instructional practices,
- 12 impactful student achievement and solutions, not administrative concerns or school
- 13 management.

14  
15 Lynda then reported on the next steps, which will focus on monitoring the current plans  
16 (WBL and recruitment/ retention), supporting leadership and the beginning of developing a  
17 plan(s) on the eighteen other indicators the faculty targets to address.

18  
19 Discussion and questions followed as to coordination in the South between technical high  
20 schools and technical colleges (it is encouraged but needs work), guidance as to prioritizing  
21 the eighteen other indicators (SREB has additional tools for self-assessment, data is key but  
22 not always easy to get), and evaluation – how are we doing? Lynda stated SREB could do  
23 a technical assistance visit to take data and analyze, conduct an intensive walkthrough  
24 observation and report findings to Superintendent Lawler, the board and the teachers. She  
25 expressed that SREB is a research body, and does not provide accreditation. Chairman  
26 Boutin thanked Ms Jackson and ended the session at 6:55pm.

### 27 28 **Public Comments**

29 Chairman Boutin called for comments; none were brought forth.

### 30 31 **Consent Agenda**

#### 32 **Minutes**

- 33 - Minutes of the November 16, 2015 Regional Governing Board Meeting

34  
35 **Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to accept the minutes of the**  
36 **November 16, 2015 meeting.**

37  
38 **Hand vote was taken with all present voting in favor, except Gulley-Ward who**  
39 **abstained.** There was no discussion.

#### 40 41 **Warrants**

#### 42 **PAYROLL**

- 43 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 11 11/30/2015 in the amount of \$ 2,622.95
- 44 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 1018 11/30/2015 in the amount of \$ 73,475.73
- 45
- 46 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 12 12/21/2015 in the amount of \$ 702.79
- 47 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 1019 12/21/2015 in the amount of \$ 65,957.23
- 48
- 49 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 13 12/21/2015 in the amount of \$ 3,246.34

1 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 1021 12/21/2015 in the amount of \$ 71,124.67  
2 **Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to approve Payroll Warrants**  
3 **numbered 11 and 1018 (November 30, 2015) and those numbered 12, 1019, 13 and**  
4 **1021 (December 21, 2015).**

5  
6 **Hand vote was taken with all present voting in favor.** Chairman Boutin announced the  
7 vote was unanimous. There was no discussion.

8  
9 **VENDOR**

- 10 - SWVRTSD Vendor Warrant # 1020 11/30/2015 in the amount of \$ 93,202.08  
11 - SWVRTSD Vendor Warrant # 1022 12/21/2015 in the amount of \$ 85,346.02

12  
13 **Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to approve Vendor Warrants**  
14 **numbered 1020 (November 30, 2015) and 1022 (December 21, 2015).**

15  
16 **Hand vote was taken with all present voting in favor.** Chairman Boutin announced the  
17 vote was unanimous. There was no discussion.

18  
19 **Revenue & Expenses, Cash Flow**

20 Chairman Boutin asked if there were any comments or concerns. None were brought forth.

21  
22 **Committee Reports**

23 ✓ Finance

24 Superintendent Lawler opened by expressing the challenge of drafting a budget in  
25 keeping with this year's goal of keeping tuition flat to the sending districts. He reported  
26 we are in a 'bubble' with slightly declining enrollment (FTEs). Health insurance  
27 increases and contractual raises continue to be the biggest budget increase drivers.  
28 Chairman Boutin reported Act 46 caps budget increases at 2.9%, anything higher and  
29 the district will be penalized. With sending schools looking to the CDC to keep their costs  
30 as low as possible, it is critical that we help.

31  
32 Lawler commented also that although our FTE count is currently slightly lower, we are  
33 within the norm statewide with other technical centers. He also cautioned that these lower  
34 FTE numbers might be representative of the new 'norm', ie in the range of 170 to 180.

35  
36 Lawler noted the FY 2016 approved budget (\$3,653,898), if rolled over for FY 2017  
37 would result in a 9% increase; the proposed 2017 FY budget (\$3,437,005) represents a  
38 5.94 % decrease in budget from last year. The proposed 2017 FY budget represents a  
39 very slight decrease in tuition (0.18%) to sending schools which will be realized with  
40 proposed tuition at \$14,469.46 (a decrease of \$25.70).

41  
42 Highlights of the proposed FY 2017 budget include:

- 43 \* No funding for the currently vacant engineering position, which represents  
44 approximately in \$75,000 savings. (However, the program will be kept)  
45 \* Delaying the implementation of Infomatics (at a savings of \$51,852) and RIFing  
46 the instructor. The full cost of implementation is expected to be in excess of  
47 \$100,000.  
48 \* Office structural changes resulting in a savings of \$32,603. Support staff would  
49 change from 2.75 to 2.0.

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- \* Returning the Business Manager position to 1.0 (full-time), represented by an increase of \$30,137. The position is currently at .6 and is responsible for grants, budgets, payroll, HR, etc.
- \* Using the Capital Improvement Reserve Account for needed roof repairs/ replacement rather than budgeting for the anticipated \$86,000 cost.

Discussion:

Gulley-Ward opened discussion with the question of why the big push earlier to adopt Infomatics and now the delay of implementation. Superintendent Lawler's response citing initial costs, lower FTEs and the need to have a successful implementation led to further mention of excess capacity, the need for an additional 10 – 20 FTEs, and a notation of the proposed deep budget decrease as being unsustainable. Innovation Grants were brought up with it being noted that this coming year Sustainable Agriculture will no longer be grant supported to any degree.

Kelley asked of the significant drop in grounds/ maintenance/ utilities. Mulligan replied that the agreement change with MAU from allocation to lease has allowed for a better way to budget. Costs to the Center are similar, however budgeting and time spent reconciling make the lease arrangement more efficient and stable.

Mulligan addressed the program and classes section of the proposed budget with Lawler noting the numbers were fairly consistent or less, which he credited to the professionals in the classrooms. There were additional comments regarding administration costs being 1.3 % of budget, the Safety expense section and what it includes and the effect of increased WBL as reflected in the Transportation expense line. Mulligan reported transportation is reimbursed by the State (anticipated revenue). An increase of \$20,000 to Reserve Funds will be also requested in the form of a Ballot Article to the voters.

Chairman Boutin reported vote on this proposed FY2017 will be delayed to the next meeting (January 11, 2015) in order to give the public time to weigh in. Both he and Superintendent Lawler thanked everyone for a budget reduction and a fine job done.

✓ Education/ Facilities

Chairman Letourneau reported the committee met December 3<sup>rd</sup> and discussed holding the engineering position for next year, delaying the implementation of Infomatics, New York students attending at local tuition, Building Trades changing to team up with Habitat for Humanity and more short blocks to increase FTEs including Building Trades and Culinary Arts offering their intro classes all year; either first semester, second semester or both.

Brief discussion followed concerning Enterprise Funds and specifically Building Trades. Houses would be built on site with Habitat purchasing, thereby guaranteeing the sale and money outlaid returned in a timely manor to CDC. Boutin reported the Advisory Committee will be meeting after the holidays to discuss this venture and more information will be forthcoming.

**Kinney moved and MacDonald seconded a motion to delay the implementation of Infomatics and also the filling of the Engineering Instructor position for FY2017.**

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2 **Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** Boutin announced the vote  
3 was unanimous.

4  
5 Letourneau further noted the board has tried to fill the engineering position for the past  
6 year, but have been unsuccessful at finding an instructor willing to take the position on  
7 the union contract salary scale.

8  
9 ✓ Policy

10 Committee chair Johnson reported the committee met December 14 and have brought  
11 forth the following:

12  
13 ✓ **Policy # 1000C: Policy**

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15 **Kinney moved and MacDonald seconded a motion to Warn required Policy #1000C.**

16  
17 **Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** Boutin announced the vote  
18 was unanimous.

19  
20 ✓ **Policy # 1015C: Disruptive Persons**

21 Johnson reported the policy was reviewed; there were no change to content, therefore  
22 no action is needed.

23  
24 ✓ **Policy # 1020C: Visits to school by Parents/ guardians, Community  
25 Members or Media; Interviewing, Filming, Videotaping or Recording.**

26 Johnson reported the policy was reviewed and the grammar was cleaned up; there were  
27 no change to content, and no action is needed.

28  
29 ✓ **Policy # 1025C: Complaints about Personnel**

30 Johnson reported the policy is still out. It is at the VSBA for input regarding the layers for  
31 due process.

32  
33 ✓ **Policy # 1100C: Fixed Assets**

34 Johnson reported the policy is being reviewed and is still out.

35  
36 The next Committee meeting will be held January 11, 2016 at 3:00pm.

37  
38 **Action Items**

39 ■ **Retirement**

40 Per Teacher's Contract Article 19.2, notice of retirement has been provided to the  
41 Director from Bruce Gabrus, Design and Fabrication instructor as well as Safety  
42 Coordinator. This retirement will be effective the end of school year 2016.

43  
44 Lawler noted Bruce has been an instructor at the Center for 21 years. Both Lawler and  
45 Boutin wished Gabrus well with Boutin commenting he remembered when Bruce came  
46 on board for the then 'machine shop'.

47  
48 **Kelly moved and Letourneau seconded a motion to accept Bruce Gabrus's letter of  
49 retirement.**

1 **Hand vote was taken with all in attendance voting in favor.** Boutin announced the vote  
2 was unanimous.

3  
4     ▪ **Adoption of Policies**

- 5  
6         ✓ **Policy # 4001C: Prevention of Harassment of Employees**

7  
8 **Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to Adopt Policy #4001C.**

9  
10 **Hand vote was taken with all present voting in favor.** Boutin announced the vote was  
11 unanimous. There was no discussion.

- 12  
13         ✓ **Policy #5085C: Search and Seizure**

14  
15 **Kinney moved and Johnson seconded a motion to Adopt Policy #5085C.**

16  
17 **Hand vote was taken with all present voting in favor.** Boutin announced the vote was  
18 unanimous. There was no discussion.

19  
20     ▪ **Bus Bids**

21 This purchase was discussed the past school year. The bus being replaced is 10-12 years  
22 old and the money for this 18-passenger bus is in the budget. The lowest bid, \$55,000 as  
23 quoted by O'Connor Bus Sales of Portland ME has been brought forward for vote tonight.  
24 The highest bid was in excess of \$72,000. The bus will be delivered in late spring/ early  
25 summer 2016.

26  
27 **Johnson moved and Kinney seconded a motion to accept the bid quote submitted by**  
28 **O'Connor Bus Sales in the amount of \$55,000 for the purchase of an 18 passenger**  
29 **bus.**

30  
31 **Hand vote was taken with all present voting in favor.** Boutin announced the vote was  
32 unanimous.

33  
34     ▪ **Internal Control Checklist (Business Office)**

35 This item will be delayed until the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

36  
37 **Superintendent's Report**

38 Superintendent Lawler:

- 39     - Spoke of the Center's Facebook page and encouraged all to take a look.  
40     - Reported there have been additional thirteen students out this past month at ten  
41     different WBL sites. Also, a WBL coop has been extended into a paid coop/  
42     internship at Sperber Toolworks.  
43     - Reported on Building Trades and their major role in the work on the Lake Paran  
44     pavilion project. The class has been working there daily since September. He noted  
45     there are good pictures on the Facebook site.  
46     - Spoke of Forestry's involvement at Molly Stark on their nature trails. The program is  
47     also working on a Bennington area trail system at Southern Vermont College where  
48     they have done some planking for stabilization and have marked five trees for felling  
49     and milling onsite.

- 1 - Thanked Culinary Arts for providing dinner for the board this evening. He also noted  
2 they are doing a fundraiser and have 170 boxes of cookies (up from 70 last year)  
3 that they have baked, packaged and pre-sold for pickup before this Wednesday.
- 4 - Reported the Bennington Rescue Squad continues to come in and work with Medical  
5 Profession students.
- 6 - Noted Human Services, FBLA, and Marketing all adopted families in need this  
7 holiday season. The students have done fund raising, shopping and gift wrapping.
- 8 - Reported Maureen O'Neil from the Abbey Group has been in to discuss healthy  
9 eating with the students.
- 10 - Spoke of the Bennington Banner article about Habitat for Humanity and the house  
11 built on Swallow Hill in Pownal which provided field experience for the Building Trade  
12 and Forestry students.

13  
14 Superintendent Lawler expressed that so much good is going on at the Center: He thanked  
15 the instructors and students and expressed his pride in them. He invited the public to make  
16 an appointment to come and see all the good things going on here.

17  
18 He then asked Meg Honsinger to give an update: Meg spoke of the School Safety Training  
19 Seminar, sponsored by the Governor, and held last month in Montpelier which focused on  
20 developing threat assessment teams on campuses. She attended with Superintendent  
21 Lawler, Cam Grande, Victor Malani, Paul Barci and the school resource officer at the middle  
22 school. Attendees were a mixture of educators and law enforcement officers. Meg  
23 expressed she feels we are farther ahead than most.

24  
25 Meg stressed the importance of everyone on campus being on the same page and having a  
26 consistent, campus-wide safety team and plan with MAU: she offered that a threat on one  
27 side affects the other side and faculty/ staff need to know how to respond. Developing  
28 consistent procedures and routines and practicing them is critical.

29  
30 Honsinger relayed a personal story as to an event at her sister's school where a teacher got  
31 shot; after reviewing the experience with her sister her walk away was that more than likely  
32 law enforcement will not be the ones to immediately respond and lock down procedures are  
33 key. She advocates for proactively replicating actual lockdown procedures; it makes a  
34 difference.

### 35 36 **Chairman's Report**

37 Boutin segued into the reviewed Disruptive Persons policy which defines a disruptive person  
38 and their actions and allows the Superintendent/ Director (or appointed designee) power to  
39 have the person leave immediately and/or to call the police.

40  
41 Boutin also spoke of the policy that deals with visitors and noted that the 'new norm' is to  
42 have all visitors log in at the main office, obtain permission to be on campus and get a  
43 badge.

44  
45 At the next meeting Jim would like to have discussion as to possibly decreasing the number  
46 of board members. He cited cost savings, being easier to get a quorum and also potentially  
47 easier to get people to run for seats with a more standardized three-year term cycle as  
48 motivators. Letourneau brought up this change might require legislative action and  
49 MacDonald requested projected cost saving figures. Jim will discuss with school council.

1 **Executive Session**

2 None this held this evening.

3  
4 **Other**

5 Nothing was brought forth this evening.

6  
7 **Adjournment**

8 **At 8:26pm Johnson moved and Kinney seconded a motion to Adjourn. All in**  
9 **attendance were in favor.**

10  
11 Respectfully submitted,

12  
13 Barb Schlesinger

14 December 30, 2015

15  
16 **Dropbox:**

- 17 - Agenda(s): Full Board 12/21 - Finance Committee 12/14 - Policy Committee 12/14 –
- 18 Education/ Facilities 12/3
- 19 - Minutes of the November 16, 2015 Regional Governing Board Regular Meeting
- 20 - Minutes of the December 3, 2015 Education/ Facilities Committee Meeting
- 21 - Minutes of the December 14, 2015 Finance Committee Meeting
- 22 - Minutes of the December 3, 2015 Finance Committee Meeting
- 23 - Minutes of the November 16, 2015 Finance Committee Meeting
- 24 - Minutes of the December 14, 2015 Policy Committee Meeting
- 25 - Minutes of the November 9, 2015 Policy Committee Meeting
- 26 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 11 & 1018
- 27 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 12 & 1019
- 28 - SWVRTSD Payroll Warrant # 13 & 1021
- 29 - SWVRTSD Vendor Warrant # 1020
- 30 - SWVRTSD Vendor Warrant # 1022
- 31 - Revenue & Expenses (Local Budget and Adult Ed), Statement of Cash Flow
- 32 - Finance Committee Agenda for December 14, 2015
- 33 - FY2017 Budget final (and work process drafts)
- 34 - Action Items
  - 35 o Bus Specs & Bus Bid
  - 36 o Retirement – Bruce Gabrus
  - 37 o Policy Documents for Adoption
  - 38 o #4001C Prevention of Harassment of Employees
  - 39 o #5085C Search and Seizure
- 40 - Policy #1100C Fixed Asset Policy
- 41 - Policy #1025C Public Complaints About Personnel (*Revision*)
- 42 - Policy #1015C Disruptive Persons (*Revision*)
- 43 - Policy #1020C Visits to School By Parents/ Guardians, Community Members or
- 44 Media; Interviewing, Filming, Videotaping or Recording (*Revision*)
- 45 - Policy # 1000C Policy (*Revision*)