**Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District (SWVRTSD)**
**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes: October 6, 2005**
Assembly Room, Career Development Center

Board Members Present: Claude DeLucia; Kevin Goodhue; Frank Lamb, Chair; Lance Matteson
(left 5:50pm).

Staff and Others Present: Mike Lawlor, CDC Teacher; Greg Lewis, Business Manager; Donna
Oyama, Director.

Recorder: Richard Bump.

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

1.  Technology Overview: Before beginning his presentation, Lawlor took members and staff on
    a brief tour of the Computer Center at the CDC.  Using a Power Point format, Lawler then
    presented an overview of computer hardware and software at the CDC, noting that
    -   there are 43 networked printers, 8 servers, 310 computers, 10 wireless access
        points, 14 LCD projectors, 7 smart boards and 17 laptops all of which are
        maintained by the Technology staff
    -   the CDC is the second largest user of technology in the SVSU (the middle school
        is the largest), and has the largest number of computer labs/PCs, a wide variety of
        specialized software (almost every CDC program has its own specialized
        software), and the largest number of servers
    -   CDC hardware and software is supported by 1.25 staff (and in comparison,
        MAUHS has 3 full-time and 1 part-time positions supported about 1/3rd the
        number of computers and very little specialized software)
    -   the hardware is aging: of the 100 Dell PCs, 57 are out of warranty 6/06, 25 run out
        10/06 and the remaining expire in 2007/2008; and the 200 other PCs are all out of
        warranty, half of which are 5 years old and the other half are 6-8 years old (and
        these are the ones "that are dropping like flies", and many of the ones that still do
        work are not compatible with newer software
    -   the technical support contract with Dell is effective, but expires when a machine is
        more than 3 years old
    -   the CDC needs to replace 200 PCs over the next two years at a cost ranging
        between $1,000 to $1,600 depending on how complex the program applications
        are that will run on the PCs
    -   although 63 replacement computers were requested last year, only 10-12
        machines were actually purchased
    -   several used computers have been purchased recently replacing PCs which can
        no longer be fixed
    -   new technological applications will put further strain on the system - distance
        learning, video conferencing, VOIP phone service, web-hosting, e-mail/exchange
        services, internet/intranet security, off-site storage, blue-tooth wireless (many of
        which can be done in-house instead of outsourcing the service)
    -   the Technology Department requests the Board's support to bring the technology
        infrastructure current and in-line with the demands/needs of the Center in terms of
        staffing and equipment
    -   the CDC pays SVSU $19,000 for internet access, e-mail, Winschool/E-class
        terminal, as well as support services provided by Jim Boutin and Chip Watson, and
        most of that cost is for internet service
    -   the CDC is the largest user of Internet band width, and when everyone in the
        SVSU is on during the day, the system slows almost to a standstill

1        -      in order to remedy response time problems and to achieve cost savings, it would
2               be reasonable to establish CDC's own Internet access (entirely independent from
3               the SVSU/MAU hardware and software) with Telcove for 2 T-1, which is a 3mb
4               connection, for a three-year contract which would cost between $12-20,000 per
5               year, and which would be easily expanded.
6        -      as much as $4,000 a year could be saved if CDC discontinued purchasing
7               technology services through the SVSU and established its own Internet
8               connection.
9        In concluding his presentation, Lawler noted that
10       -      two students having to share a computer "just doesn't work"
11       -      although improved Internet access and response time is critical, that improved
12              access is meaningless if the computers themselves are out of date or non-existent,
13              and so his priority would be to upgrade array pf PCs before upgrading the Internet
14              connection.
15       In concluding discussion, Lawler agreed to develop
16       -      a three-year technology equipment replacement/upgrade plan (equipment and
17              costs), and to have that plan available before the budget cycle begins in November
18       -      a proposal (cost and services) for discontinuing all or part of the purchased SVSU
19              Technology services, to include, among other things, contacting Verizon to see
20              how their costs for internet access compare with Telcove's quote, and researching
21              what private sector technology support services would cost which would be
22              comparable to the support currently provided by Chip Watson
23       -      a staffing proposal for the Technology Department which considers not only
24              current hardware and software support requirements but also future needs
25              (videoconferencing, distance learning, etc).
26       Lawler also noted that it will be extremely difficult to ever "catch up with where the CDC
27       should be" unless there is a large infusion of funds, and Lamb suggested that Lawler should
28       investigate the possibility of locating technology grants.  Lewis agreed to work with Lawler to
29       develop costs for the three plans/proposals described above, and to determine if there is any
30       funding in the current year budget to support any of these projects.  Members thanked
31       Lawler for his presentation.
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33   2.  Distance Learning: Lamb noted that the FY07 budget will include a marketing line item, part
34       of which will be used to support distance learning projects.
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36   3.  Wood Chip System: Oyama reported that legal counsel has indicated that the position
37       Matteson took during the September meeting in which he disallowed one board member's
38       vote on the wood chip heating system (due to a perceived conflict of interest), was correct,
39       and therefore the board will act on the wood chip system again during the October meeting.
40       In subsequent discussion, DeLucia expressed concerns that MAU has evidently not
41       considered any other alternative energy plan (or other energy savings projects), nor did it bid
42       out design and engineering specifications for the project, nor can MAU guarantee the level of
43       state reimbursement for the system (currently at 90%).  Members and staff noted that
44       -      voter approval is required before any construction can begin
45       -      when that vote is taken, actual (not estimated) construction costs will be known
46              (and the construction cost of the project will go out for open bid)
47       -      MAU needs voter approval, but not CDC approval, for the project
48       -      the 25% allocation of cost to CDC is based on MAU/CDC square foot proportions
49       -      although MAU has been discussing the wood chip system for over a year, CDC
50              administration was never included in that discussion (and this would have been a
51              topic appropriate for both the Facilities and Finance committees)
52       -      it probably would have been better to allow the RGB time to discuss and consider
53              the proposal during the meeting, but not to vote on it until the October meeting
54       -      construction on the wood chip system will be completed in time for the beginning of
55              the 06-07 heating season.
56       In concluding discussion, members agreed that Lewis and Lamb should meet with the SVSU

1   Business Manager to discuss CDC budget implications and financing for the wood chip
2   system options (the CDC cost will be between $50,000 - $75,000).  Lamb also suggested
3   that the Capital Repair and Replacement reserve fund could be used to fund the heating
4   system.

6   4.   Other:
7        a.   *Equipment Funding*: Oyama reported that, in the past, the state has distributed $20,000
8             to each of the 20 technical centers in the state for equipment replacement/upgrade, but
9             that this year, only $5,000 has been firmly committed (but not yet distributed), and the
10            remaining $15,000 will be distributed contingent upon the sale of a state owned
11            building. Oyama also noted that the CDC 3-year detailed equipment plan represents
12            33% of the entire amount requested by all 20 technical centers.
13       b.   *November Warrants*: Lewis noted that checks cut on 11/9/05 will be included in
14            11/20/05 board meeting, but the checks cut on 11/18/05 (cut early because of the
15            Thanksgiving holiday) will have to be included in the December Agenda packet, due to
16            timing constraints in mailing the November Agenda packet.
17       c.   *Funding Student Organizations*: Although DECA generates income on a regular basis
18            through the Student Store and FFA raises money through sale of products
19            created/grown by students, Oyama noted the remaining student organizations - FBLA,
20            SkillsUSA, and FEA  - do not have any means to generate money other than by special
21            fund raising events. Oyama also noted that because some of the activities these
22            organizations participate cost a considerable amount of money (SkillsUSA participation
23            in the recent national convention cost about $12,000), she would like to include $10-
24            20,000 in a line item in next year's budget to support student organizations.   Members
25            also noted that some of these costs are typically covered through the Perkins Grant, but
26            that this funding source in shrinking (and may be eliminated).

28  5.   Minutes: Goodhue moved and DeLucia seconded a motion to approve the Minutes of
29       September 15, 2005 and the motion passed unanimously.

31  At 6:35 Goodhue moved and DeLucia seconded a motion to adjourn, and the motion passed
32  unanimously.