

1 **Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District (SVRTSD)**  
2 **Regional Governing Board Meeting Minutes: Monday, April 8, 2024, in-person and online**  
3

4 **RGB members present:** M. Cutler, A. Edelson, L. Johnson, J. Orzechowski, G. Sauer, K. Swierad and TJ  
5 Williams  
6 Online-C. Putney and D. Whitman  
7

8 **SWT represented** by: Supt./Dir. Michael Lawler, M. Honsinger, Asst. Dir. and R. Tattersall,  
9 Business Manager  
10

11 Audience: CAT-TV  
12

13 **Recorder:** Sandra Redding, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent  
14

15 Meeting was opened at 10:03AM by Chair Swierad. With no public comments or concerns  
16 noted, the consent agenda was introduced:

- 17 • March Full Board minutes were unanimously approved with motions from Edelson and  
18 Cutler.
- 19 • Payroll warrants were unanimously approved with motions from Cutler and Johnson
- 20 • Vendor warrants were unanimously approved with motions from Edelson and Cutler

21 Business office documents were noted as present with no questions or concerns.  
22

23 At 10:07AM, the board went into executive session by unanimous vote.

24 At 10:20AM, the board returned from executive session and unanimously agreed to continue  
25 open session.  
26

27 Action item:

28 Motions to accept the job posting for the open Superintendent/Director's position were made by  
29 Cutler with a second from Orzechowski. Result was a unanimous vote.  
30

31 Action Item:

32 Motions to accept the non-contract positions up for renewal were made by Cutler and Williams.  
33 With no opposition and unanimous vote, the six contracts were approved.

- 34 • Workforce Education
- 35 • Student Data/Guidance Assistant
- 36 • Information Technology
- 37 • Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent
- 38 • Outreach Coordinator
- 39 • Assistant to Business Manager  
40

41 Action Items:

- 42 • The board received a retirement letter from Work Based Learning Coordinator, Wendy  
43 Klein. Supt. Lawler read the letter aloud. The board, with motions from Cutler and  
44 Johnson and unanimous support accepted the resignation with regrets. The board clerk  
45 will write an appropriate letter to Ms. Klein.  
46
- 47 • Nomination for an additional Adult Education CDL Instructor. Discussion ensued:
  - 48 ○ Why was the education/facilities committee not involved in this addition?
  - 49 ○ Johnson felt strongly that this should have traveled thru education committee for  
50 complete understanding of the need for the addition before presentation to full  
51 board

- 1           ○ Supt. Lawler informed the group that the board has not typically been involved in
- 2           the development and hiring for the adult ed program. He stated that if this is what
- 3           the board would prefer, that can certainly happen. Also, this is not a fulltime
- 4           position, just a supplemental to the present program.
- 5           ○ Members noted their pleasure that we have the need for this very important skill to
- 6           increase our CDL programing here. There is a high demand for CDL drivers.
- 7           Board is very supportive of the idea, just think the process might be in need of
- 8           change.
- 9           ○ Lawler suggested the board approve this applicant and going forth, considerations
- 10          for the adult education hiring process can be discussed and if needed, changed.
- 11          ○ With motions from Cutler and Johnson and unanimous support, the board
- 12          approved the hire of Bradford Dewey for Adult Education CDL Instructor.

13

14       ● Field Trips:

- 15           ○ \*Cosmetology, Skills, Williston/Essex, VT, April 3 & 4; overnight, verbal granted
- 16           ▪     \*Postponed till next week; may be here at SW Tech
- 17
- 18           ○ Culinary, April 9 &10, Skills, Essex, VT, overnight; ok to book granted
- 19
- 20           ○ Culinary, April 25-29, Prostart National Conference, Baltimore, MD, overnight & out of state
- 21           ○ With motions from Edelson and Orzehowski and unanimous support, the field trips
- 22           were all approved.

23

24       The superintendent's report:

- 25           ○ The CLNA report is postponed to May as there were technical difficulties in the final
- 26           product. Lawler will present next month.
- 27           ○ Advisory Committees Joint Spring Meeting will be Wednesday, April 24, at SW Tech.
- 28           This is mandatory by federal and state law for our program instructors to conduct two
- 29           meetings per year. The meetings are always well attended and much is accomplished
- 30           for each program.
- 31           ○ Lawler went over the extensive list of happenings here at SW Tech, especially all the
- 32           interesting field trips, competitions and college tours. We are very busy!
- 33           ○ Lawler reminded the board that the next meeting would be Monday May 13 at 4PM as
- 34           the board had voted in the March reorganization meeting to alternate the monthly
- 35           meetings, one, 10AM and one, 4PM.
- 36           ○ Lawler requested a change of date for the June meeting to coincide with the week he will
- 37           be here in June. SW Tech Awards night will be Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup> , so as he will be here
- 38           for the last time, he would appreciate holding the board meeting Monday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>. 10AM
- 39           ○ With motions from Cutler and Williams and unanimous support, this was approved.

40

41       With the discussion just completed concerning the June meeting, Edelson made a motion with

42       second from Putney concerning moving all the full board meetings to 4PM instead of an

43       alternating schedule. Discussion ensued:

- 44           ○ Edelson feels board meetings need to be totally and fully accessible to all people,
- 45           citizens, teachers, staff, students and community members as this is his primary reason
- 46           for being part of this board. He is all about accessibility. He feels working people do not
- 47           have the opportunity to attend, bring input, and offer their support for the workings of the
- 48           school. Zoom is helpful but still is lacking. He would like to see students encouraged to
- 49           be involved more as civics is very important to our society. Even with this modified

- 1 schedule of AM and PM, he feels it is complicated and not truly fair for the everyday  
2 person. He is strongly advocating for the 4PM meeting time for all full board meetings.
- 3 ○ Cutler stated that in one way or another, he has been involved with the board since  
4 2009. He noted that there are very few in attendance at any meeting. He feels there is a  
5 lack of public access and perhaps, local government should engage with some  
6 solutions.
  - 7 ○ Johnson felt as a vote was taken at the reorganization meeting with approval given for  
8 alternate AM and PM meetings, that it should stand as voted. If meetings are all PMs,  
9 the board cannot see the school and students in action and get a real-time feel for the  
10 programs. He strongly feels meetings should stay as voted.
  - 11 ○ Edelson respects the difference of opinion, but still plans on advocating for the PM  
12 meeting time. He really wants to see teachers and students be able to attend if there  
13 are any issues they would like to address. Cutler noted that plans can always be made  
14 if teachers/students wish to attend any meeting.
  - 15 ○ Business Manager, Tattersall noted that we also need to think about the transportation  
16 situations for teachers and board members with later meetings. The administration  
17 would always provide coverage for any teacher who wished to attend a board meeting.  
18 With an alternating schedule of meeting times, it may allow for a variety of community  
19 members and parents to attend due to their specific schedules. This is totally the  
20 board's decision which we will respect and fully support. If you want to see programs  
21 and students in action, the early time is somewhat better.
  - 22 ○ Edelson stated he will continue to bring this situation to the board every month as that's  
23 how strongly he feels about this.
  - 24 ○ With motion Edelson and second from Putney, the vote to keep all full board meetings  
25 at 4PM was presented to the board for vote. There were two for the motion, Edelson  
26 and Putney and 7 against. Vote failed.

27  
28 Board member Orzehowski shared some thoughts on his election as clerk of this board. He did  
29 not appreciate how the nomination process was conducted. He will stay on as clerk, but hopes  
30 more courtesy will be shown in the future to individuals before they are put on the spot on live  
31 TV. He will draw up a letter for Ms. Klein this week.

32  
33 Johnson noted that there are many board training opportunities for board members and we  
34 need to fully take advantage of what is offered. To properly participate on a board, training is  
35 essential for positive results. You should have no preset notions upon election. The  
36 superintendent runs the school, teachers do their classes and the board is responsible for being  
37 the pipeline to the community. Is the proper work being done and fully accomplished? He  
38 suggests all members go online to [VSBA.org](http://VSBA.org) for information and training opportunities. The  
39 board chair and superintendent work hard to keep the school out of any trouble and problems;  
40 open meeting law must be totally followed and we must watch out for any conflict of interest in  
41 the daily operations.

42  
43 Orzehowski responded he will gladly work to get the job done, understands the response and  
44 just asks for a head's up next time.

45  
46 With no further business, the board adjourned at 11:07AM with motions from Edelson and  
47 Cutler and full support of the board.