

LAMOILLE UNION DISTRICT #18 BOARD MEETING MINUTES
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2009

Board members present: B. Bailey, D. Baker, J. Eisenhardt, S. Hamlyn-Prescott, P. Ingvaldstad, T. O'Hear, D. Osborn, S. Reber, K. Roberts, W. Sander, D. Whitcomb. Absent: B. Penberthy. Others: D. Taylor, B. Schaffer, J. Teegarden. C. Hindes, M. Frederick, M. Spaulding, S. Bernath, Shirley Brown, Mr. & Mrs. Thadd Tallman, Earl Domina, Jr.

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

I. Call to Order, Introductions, Adopt the Agenda, Announcements. and Public Input

A. Call to Order – 6:37

B. Adopt the Agenda

MOTION: D. Whitcomb moved to adopt the agenda as presented, J. Eisenhardt seconded, and the motion was passed.

C. Announcements

D. Whitcomb said he had been invited to talk about VT history with one of the middle school teams, and he found that the kids were very attentive and polite, and asked good questions. He really enjoyed talking to them.

D. Public Input

Four Belvidere residents asked for more information about the Belvidere school bus. M. Frederick explained who had been invited to bid on transportation, and who had bid. Cambridge and Eden weren't interested in bidding on the Waterville/Belvidere run. Only First Student and Lamoille Valley Transit bid. It cost us about \$36K/year to do it ourselves. Lamoille Valley Transit was the lowest bidder. They can do it at a lower cost than we can. M. Frederick met with someone from Lamoille Valley Transit the other day and asked him about the late run. He said it is a matter of coordination. He believes they can do it so Cambridge kids don't have to stay on the bus for so long. She told him people are questioning how his company can do it for less, when the current bus stays in Belvidere. He said one of their drivers lives close to that area and would keep the bus there. He has a lot of experience. E. Domina questioned whether it would really cost more for us to run the bus in the long run, if we take into consideration keeping the bus for more than 10 years until after it is paid off. He asked for a 10-year history of transportation costs. D. Baker said Belvidere kids ride the Eden late bus. S. Reber asked, will Belvidere kids be getting the same service as previously? M. Frederick said yes.

S. Brown asked if there was any discussion of this at the budget information meetings. She didn't hear any at the one she went to. S. Reber said the board has known for months that we were going to be getting bids from a number of bidders, but we didn't know what the result would be. S. Brown asked, was there anything on the agenda about a vote on this? S. Reber said it was on the April 7 agenda under Committee Reports and Action Items. Approval of Transportation Bids was listed under Finance Committee. He didn't think it

was discussed at the annual meeting. M. Frederick said at that point we had budgeted as if there would be no change.

T. Tallman said he thought the high school was supposed to own the bus that provided transportation for Belvidere students. S. Reber said efforts were made to find record of that stipulation. M. Frederick said every vote and document we found did not indicate Lamoille Union had to own the bus and driver. D. Baker said she contacted the archives and was sent a disk. There is a document that says that originally the district voted to buy and operate 7 buses. W. Sander said his understanding is that part of the agreement was that the high school would provide transportation, but not specifically by owning buses. We haven't been able to find that had to be done by a high-school-owned bus. He asked, what is the issue if kids are being given equivalent service? E. Domina said it is the principle. His great uncle and Roger Mann said for many years that part of the agreement for Belvidere and Waterville to join the union was that Lamoille Union had to provide their own bus to transport the students. D. Baker said what she received from the archive was incomplete; there was no article of agreement for any town.

S. Reber asked, are Belvidere residents suspicious that the board will start denying bus service to Belvidere students? What is the issue? E. Domina said cost is an issue. He is not convinced it will be cheaper to contract out transportation. M. Spaulding said we'd have to buy another bus if we wanted to have a transportation department, because our spare bus is no good. Also, we don't want to keep a bus for 10 years and then have a big spike in expenses when we buy a new one. We usually want to have a constant budget. S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked, doesn't our contract with Cambridge say the buses have to be 7 years or younger? M. Frederick said to the best of her memory, that is true of all our contracts – in order to transport students, buses have to be 7 years or younger. M. Frederick said she doesn't have transportation cost figures going 10 years back, but she will provide what she has. S. Brown asked, will Belvidere high school students be transported with Belvidere elementary students? How many trips will the bus make in a day? M. Spaulding said the same number as now – 2, not including trips back unloaded, which are not part of the contract. S. Brown asked, Belvidere elementary kids will have to ride with high school students, when kids from other schools do not? She asked, are we guaranteed transportation for our kids? S. Reber said absolutely. He said this board is committed to transporting kids of Belvidere and all towns. The board voted with the intention that all students will get the same service as before. If Belvidere discovers the service is not meeting their needs, they should come to the board. D. Baker said she was not sure the board understood S. Brown's question about elementary kids being picked up at the same time as high school kids. The concern is that kindergarten kids would have to get up early and go to Waterville and wait. D. Osborn said she doesn't know of any other school district where it is different; that is the way it is in all districts.

S. Reber said the question is, is the service going to be same next year as this year? M. Spaulding said yes. D. Baker said people in Belvidere are upset because the board changed something that has been in place for 42 years, and it was not warned. All Belvidere residents feel there is a document requiring LU to own the bus, and they will keep looking for it. They also feel the numbers presented are not truly reflective of cost. K. Roberts said change is always difficult to manage, but is usually done for good reasons. Not too long ago, Hyde Park went to transporting their high school students with their elementary students. Now kindergarteners ride with high schoolers. It turned out fine, although people had the same concerns. She said the law doesn't require that transportation be provided, but this school is committed to providing it. W. Sander said the documents that have been located clearly indicate that transportation is to be provided – that is part of the original agreement, and not just our intention. He asked, has Waterville raised any objection? M. Frederick said no. D. Baker asked, do they know about it? M. Frederick said the elementary board knows about it. (*S. Brown, the Tallmans, and E. Domina left.*)

2. ***Consent Agenda Items***

D. Baker moved to approve the minutes of April 7, seconded by W. Sander. D. Baker asked that they be amended to include on p. 7 the comment she made just before she left, that if documentation is found, the board can expect a lawsuit. **The motion to approve the minutes as amended was passed.**

W. Sander moved to accept the administration reports, seconded by J. Eisenhardt. K. Roberts said often there are action items incorporated into the administration reports, and suggested clarification about whether accepting administration reports includes approving those action items. B. Schaffer said he sometimes includes an action item on the consent agenda report – for example approval for hiring a hall monitor – that doesn't require discussion and can more efficiently be dealt with as part of the consent agenda. If he includes an action item, he intends the board to approve it when accepting the consent agenda. It was agreed that administrators should label action items in their reports (perhaps by putting them in different sections) to indicate whether they are consent agenda items or items to be voted on separately.

3. ***Directors' Orders***

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to approve directors' orders from April 21, 2009 in the following amounts: LUSD #18 \$532,659.10; Vocational Building Trades \$5,861.68. The electric bill from Feb. 23 to Mar. 24 was around \$19K. **The motion was passed.**

MOTION: W. Sander moved to approve directors' orders from May 5, 2009 in the following amounts: \$30,000 Central VT Adult Basic Ed; \$13, 258.43 principal (short term loan); \$378.93 interest (short term loan);. \$363.04 Vocational Building Trades; \$156,802.81 LUSD #18, seconded by K. Roberts. D. Baker asked if alternative energy has been looked into as a way of lowering the electric bill. M. Spaulding said alternative energy is not always cost effective. He goes to seminars to learn about alternative energy sources, and we are always doing things to the building – replacing old inefficient lighting, etc. J. Teegarden said his electrical instructor learned

about an opportunity to buy individual solar panels. He's going to get one for his own program, and will have information for the board in about a month about the school district possibly adding more of these cells. M. Spaulding said that if we receive the grant we applied for to a photovoltaic system in the Cricket Hill addition, it might actually be better to think about putting those down here on the heavy tech building, where the tech center students could see how they work. **The motion was passed.**

4. ***Administrative Action Items***

A. **Middle School**

C. Hindes asked for approval to hire Deirdre E. Fournier for the math position. She would teach remedial and accelerated math, and work with Discovery students. D. Taylor noted that D. Fournier has had experience with the curriculum we're currently implementing, and also is nearing certification in social studies.

P. Ingvoldstad moved to approve hiring Deirdre Fournier as a middle school math teachers, W. Sander seconded, and the motion was passed.

B. **High School**

B. Schaffer had two extra duty contracts to be approved, for two people who would serve as co-coaches for JV baseball.

K. Roberts moved to approve extra duty coaching contracts for Mike Aither and Tom Jack, and the motion was seconded and passed.

B. Schaffer said this Friday from 1:10 to 2:20, the Varsity Club will be sponsoring a Varsity Challenge in which students are partnered with faculty members. He and S. Bernath will be partners.

C. **GMTCC**

In the past, the tech center has not charged tuition for adults with a high school diploma. They have attended on a space available basis. The law says centers can charge tuition to such students, which cannot exceed 40% of announced tuition. J. Teegarden researched what other centers do. Each applies a formula based on the law. There is no consensus among the RAB about charging tuition. He thought he should bring it to the board's attention to consider. He considered what he thought would be a fair amount to charge to adult students with high school diplomas (which would not include people with GED's.) He proposes a formula of $(\text{Announced Tuition} * .4 * .75) / 2$. The .75 takes into account that students are in the programs $\frac{3}{4}$ of the school day. The division by two is an affordability factor. His recommendation is not to charge tuition for the coming year, and to look at this in the future. W. Sander said he supported this recommendation. He said he doesn't like the idea of discriminating against people who got a diploma, since those without diplomas can come without tuition. J. Teegarden said a person without a diploma is eligible for money from the state and is part of the six semester average that the assessment is based on. They generate revenue, those with diplomas don't. K. Roberts asked how a 30 year old student gets billed back to the towns. J. Teegarden said he would have to research that. P. Ingvoldstad said he supports J. Teegarden's recommendation, and asks that any change go through the RAB. D. Baker asked, don't we get federal money for adult education? J. Teegarden

said our adult education program is not the same as this. The board agreed not to charge tuition for the coming year.

J. Teegarden said an automotive program student won first place in the Ford Motor Company Skills USA competition for VT and NH. Two winners, Dean Jones and Matt Anastasio, will have their costs paid to go to Michigan for further competition, and will also get about \$40K worth of scholarships.

D. Central Office

AdCo met last week. We are beginning to get guidance from the DOE about ARRA. AdCo has been looking at school improvement priorities and how funds will be disseminated. The high school will begin to receive some title I dollars. As of earlier today, there have been no VT cases of swine flu. There is active work at the state level to make sure they are on top of that. A technology plan for the whole SU is being developed this year. It is in the draft stage, and will be finished in time for the next LNSU board meeting. That board will need to approve it. An SU-wide plan will allow us to better coordinate purchasing and professional development, and potentially access additional grant funds. D. Taylor distributed information on the high school completion bill. She said it aligns well with our evolving goals.

5. Committee Reports and Action Items

A. Board Goals Planning

D. Taylor and principals met last Thursday to look at the goals and initial action plan steps. They were pleased to see so much positive alignment with existing action plans. They felt administrators and the board could engage in some refinement regarding indicators. B. Schaffer said the broad goals are attainable and set a good direction for administration, but he feels strategies and indicators of whether goals have been met do not necessarily need to be so specific. There could be other strategies and indicators that would also allow the goal to be met. C. Hinds agreed. He said it was good to see common ground with action plans. J. Teegarden mentioned the goal about student success. He would like the board to come up with what they see as indicators of success. NECAP results would be too narrow in his opinion. D. Taylor said the board might want to think about extending this process across the SU, because many things we want to achieve are related to what happens to students before they get here. She recommended that the board work with administrators on refinement of indicators at the first June meeting. Administration could facilitate that work.

D. Osborn said the board worked on the goals a lot before administrators got involved. She asked, are the goals compatible with administration goals? Administrators said yes. She said individualized learning plans were discussed a lot. From the administrators' point of view, is that something that is impossible and should be abandoned? Is there anything else the board focused on that administrators don't think is worth pursuing? J. Teegarden said some things the board came up with were strategies rather than goals. Personal learning plans are one way of meeting a goal. The board needs to ask administrators

how they think they could achieve the goals. K. Roberts said the board may want to come up with some parameters for strategies, such as saying they should be research-based or targeted to individual learning styles, then let administrators come up with specific strategies. J. Teegarden said once the board is happy with the goals, and has come up with indicators that signify goal achievement, then it should ask administrators how they want to get there. S. Reber said all we can really do is measure performance against indicators. B. Schaffer said there is no disagreement about broad goals. D. Taylor said rather than having individual action plans and a focus on targets, we could have goals aligned across schools, and a focus on accountability. P. Ingvoldstad asked, would engaged learners be a goal or a strategy? J. Teegarden said a goal – but do we know if we have engaged learners? How are we going to measure that? D. Taylor will work with administrators to prepare a proposed agenda for the next meeting.

B. NSBA Convention

K. Roberts said she went to 16 work sessions. A lot of PowerPoints from sessions are available online at the NSBA website. One session was about Biloxi, Mississippi's 3-year effort to develop local assessments. They have created a library of questions which they invite others to use. She suggests we look at Student Clearinghouse. For \$425, we can get the last 6 years of data on students associated with student loans. In one session it was stated that we should expect federal initiatives calling for 12-hour school days and 12 months of school. One session was Work Rules of Teachers: How to Put Student Needs First in Teacher Contract Negotiations. Another was The School Board's Role in Approving School and District Improvement Plans. The PowerPoint from that one is online. There was one about Ohio school boards: Moving from Vision to Action: A Strategic Planning Process that Works. There was one about Response to Intervention, which will be a federal requirement in 2 or 3 years. One of No More Cookie Cutter Schools, about current school design. There was a lot of focus on 12-hour-a-day 12-month schools. There was a session on a study in Virginia that found no correlation between central office staffing levels and student achievement.

C. Finance Committee

The committee's next meeting will be Tuesday, May 12, at 4:30. At the May 19 board meeting, the committee will report back on the financials the board received in the mail, and will give information about procurement cards. Our internal accounts currently tend to handle too much money. We write lots of checks, but we could use procurement cards instead.

D. Policy Committee

Policy 6.24, Driver's Education, hasn't been sent out to everyone yet, so it will have to be warned next time. D. Osborn said this evening the committee discussed the current substance abuse policy and began a discussion about possible changes, which will involve pulling out some procedures. The committee will try to have a policy retreat this summer.

E. Curriculum Committee

W. Sander said the committee will meet before the next board meeting. The focus for the immediate future will be looking at the graduation rate issue in depth. He may not be at the next meeting.

F. Cricket Hill Building Committee

The committee met today, reviewed some final designs, and agreed on the one most preferred. M. Frederick has applied for a waiver that will allow us to not bid pieces of the project, to allow kids to be involved in all phases.

G. Staff & Community Relations Committee

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said someone will need to coordinate the teacher staff luncheon on the 16th. Several people volunteered to help out. T. O'Hear will coordinate.

6. *Review of Full Board Annual Calendar, Request for Future Agenda Items, and Adjourn*

K. Roberts said the latest news is that the FY10 general fund transfer to education is scheduled to be reduced, resulting in an increase in tax rates.

D. Osborn requested that the annual agenda include, before the next transportation bids go out, a review of secondary transportation.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 8:29, and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna E. Griffiths

Actions taken at the LU District #18 Board Meeting 5/5/09:

1. *Call to Order, Introductions, Adopt the Agenda, Announcements. and Public Input*
 - B. **Adopt the Agenda**

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