

TOWNSHEND SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES
@JAMAICA VILLAGE SCHOOL
7-21-15
7:00 PM-DRAFT

Present: Deidre Beattie, Al Claussen, Cliff Passino, April Chase, Members of the Board, Deborah Leggott, Principal Vincent DeBonis, CFO WCSU, Judy Hawkins, Recorder

Call to Order: Al called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm.

Additions and Deletions: Al asked to add to the agenda under **New Business:**
Resignation

Members of the Public: Jerry and Nancy Dyke

Consent Calendar:

- a. Principal's Report
- b. Superintendent's Report
- c. Minutes for June 8, 2015

Without objection consent calendar approved unanimously.

Treasurer and financial reports: Vincent presented the Revenue Statement as of June 30, 2015. Net Increase/Decrease to Fund Balance: \$58, 299 this figure may change subject to auditors report. Vincent reported that the WCSU has new auditors this year. The audit will begin at the end of August 2015. The name of the new auditing firm is Bonadio Group The cost to Townshend for the audit will be \$7,000 (which will be a savings). The audits will be done much more timely than before. The auditing firm will attend a public board meeting to present the audit to each individual board in WCSU.

Bills and Purchase Orders: Al made a motion to pay the bills and purchase orders as follows: Payroll PO #4 \$1,379.53, Payroll PO#5 \$5,937.92, Payroll PO#6 \$4,037.32, Payroll PO #7 \$4,557.61, Payroll PO#8 \$1,668.92, Payroll PO#1 \$5,937.92, Payroll PO#2 \$6,029.24, Payroll PO#3 \$3,375.71. Rollover from 2014-15 FY Payroll PO#77 \$95.24, Payroll PO#78 \$15.78 Payroll PO#75 \$30,486.38, Payroll #76 \$30,126.39 and back to FY 15-16 Vendor Warrant #9 \$4,708.59 and PO #10 \$18,467.75. No discussion. Motion carried to pay bills and purchase orders as read.

New Business: Deidre announced that she will need to resign from the TES board because she has taken a position within the district and can't serve on the board. Al thanked her for her service while on the board.

Correspondence: Water Flow Report: There were two reports, one from May and the other from June. Al reported that 457 gallons were used in May and it dropped to 301

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gallons in June. There was also the Annual Inspection Report 2015-Waste Water Inspection and Disposal System. No problems to report.

Upcoming Meetings:

- a. WCSU Executive Committee Meeting on Wednesday, July 22, 2015, 7 pm @ L&G
- b. TES Board Meeting on Monday August 10, 2015, 7 pm

Executive Session: None

Jamaica School Board convenes meeting jointly at 7:00 pm

Purpose of meeting between Townshend and Jamaica: Discussion regarding new education bill.

Present: Anne Reynolds, Stephanie Amyot, Tom Tolbert, Heather Hellenbeck and Amber Burrow, Members of the Jamaica Board, Al Claussen, April Chase, Cliff Passino, and Deidre Beattie, Members of the Townshend School Board, Deborah Leggott, Principal, TES, Laura Hazard, Principal, Jamaica Village School, Vincent DeBonis, CFO, Steven John, Superintendent, Emily Long, Steven Morse, Jerry Dyke, Nancy Dyke, Oliver Olsen, Janet Hamilton, and Judy Hawkins, Recorder

Oliver Olsen started out the meeting by summarizing the new education bill: Oliver introduced himself and encouraged everyone to ask questions. He gave an overview of his role in the legislature. He said we need finance, governance and policy all together and he stated that this recommendation was taken to heart. Emily Long became a member of the Education Committee. We should be looking at a lot of opportunities. There should be consolidation of governance, need school districts to get on board. Emily commented that lack of equity is a major driver. There are a lot of children out there that are not getting the services they need. Local communities need to be able to say what they valued and what their students need. Different communities are quite different from each other. No legislation passes without having some technical amendments.

Oliver: This is a very large, complex bill and he has already found some technical problems with it. There will be amendments and corrections to it. Every measure out there, we are the highest spending in the country. Oliver stressed that the districts that start out in the front will have the greatest advantage.

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Steven John: Steven Morse said the State Board of Education is very supportive of this process. He said this is very important and there will be some savings. By the end of next July 900 students or more, there will be one governing body for that. This process can last as long as 2019 before it goes into effect. He encouraged board members to get in early. Emily mentioned there are also alternative methods as well. There is a lot of variability with this bill. Act 60 addressed some glaring inequities. There is a difference between urban and rural schools; it is all based on per pupil costs.

Al: He wants to see the spending cap squared up. This will be in place for 2 years, this is a soft cap and you can exceed that. It is used as a bridge.

Emily: There has been a migration into towns and along with that they have taken on a great amount of poverty.

One of the things on the table and came close to happening, a need to reduce the excess spending and this has been out there for awhile. Oliver pushed back on this and said it isn't fair at all. He said to focus on the growth rate. At least you can level fund and not be penalized. It doesn't come without an impact such as a reduction in staff.

Steven Morse: He wants to make sure it is about equitable education for all students throughout Vermont. He said it is a State of Vermont education system. The boards will stay local. We still will have a voice as to what we believe our child's education should be and it is local.

Stephanie Amyot: She mentioned that Townshend and Jamaica have been in discussion for about 2 years for different possibilities. She wanted to know if there are some options that we have to look at.

Oliver: Both are receiving small schools grants. There will be a day when this goes away. This includes merging in a larger governance structure, consolidate two schools, there are many ways you can keep the small school grant.

Emily urged the boards to look at what is happening throughout the country in relation to school choice.

The legislature suggests that the WCSU set up a study committee, there is money to help with this process.

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Jamaica Board Member: The question was: They wanted to know what the difference with the R.E.D. Committee-Steven John said the RED was voluntary, now it is going to be that if you don't do it they will do it for you.

Al thinks we need to have different scenarios to be able to present to the town. We have to reach out to SU in other areas. We have to make sure we don't leave anyone out as an orphan.

At the end of the joint meeting, Steven John reported that there is a very promising opportunity for better use of transportation resources. Steven attended a meeting in Townshend. BMH, Grace Cottage Hospital and Windham Regional Commission will get a Route 30 route going. There will be busses up and down the valley different times of the day.

Adjourn: Deidre made a motion to adjourn the TES Board Meeting at 8:35 p.m. Motion carried. Jamaica Board members went back to resume their meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Hawkins
Recorder