

**MINUTES**  
**Mill River Union School Board**  
**Wednesday, March 16, 2011**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Brownson Spencer, (Board Chair), Karl Ross, George Ambrose, Andy Richards-Peelle, Chip Gottlieb, Diane Baker, Doug Earle, (Board Members), Craig Shappy, Vice Principal, Dana Cole-Levesque, (Superintendent of Schools), Ken Webb, Judy Kennedy, Sue Striglia, Jo Jo Valente, (Staff), Marie-Fran Eloi, Tom and Tammy Heffernan, Melissa Rosenberg (Parents), Bernie Peatman, Curriculum Coordinator.

**Call to Order:** Brownson Spencer, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Agenda:** No changes

**Public Input:** Tammy Heffernan, parent, talked about the new Friday schedule that has been initiated in the Middle School. She expressed that her concerns were not addressed by Mr. Pomeroy. She asked what the board's position is on this? In his written report, Brownson read Mr. Pomeroy's letter in regard to this topic. This subject is brand new to the Board. Mrs. Rosenberg spoke on the subject. Diane Baker, Karl Ross and Brownson said the board had not been previously made aware of this change and felt they should have been informed. Marie-Fran Eloi, parent, felt that her child is not being challenged, and he said last Friday there was no teacher in the room with the students. Communication channels are not open with the parents.

There was a letter that went home with students but nothing was posted on the website. Mrs. Heffernan also expressed concerns about the students being pushed so much toward Stafford rather than being encouraged to go to college.

Brownson assured them that the board will look into this and invite them back to a future board meeting.

Karl said that the administration knew parents were going to be present, and he felt they should have been at the meeting. Dana had advised Katherine and Andy to attend the meeting in Danby as he felt it was important and involved multiple schools.

**Teachers' Association:** None

**Physical Education Presentation:** Ken Webb, Sue Striglia, Judy Kennedy and JoJo Valente shared a power point on health and physical fitness. They also presented the board with a Fitness Gram which shows the progress of students. The Fitness Gram gives each student their own components in physical activities. An assessment can show both weaknesses and strengths. There was discussion on the technology piece relating to the Fitness Gram. A demonstration of a heart monitor was given by Sue Striglia. The monitor was purchased through a grant.

Middle School has physical education all year. Archery, golf, badminton, table tennis, dance, etc.

Weight Training Class – an elective and very popular with the students. Only 15 students in a class due to space and safety. Only junior and seniors can take the class. Only offered in Block B. This class is not just for athletes but to help all the students become well rounded.

Adapted Physical Education is for grades 7-12. Use the VAC pool and the weight room.

Sue talked about the health course goals. Grades 7 and 8 have a 6 week course. High school has one semester and the course is required for all students.

Okemo Field Trip: Jo Jo presented the different aspects that the students learn from visiting the ski area. Many educational facets are incorporated into this experience.

Unified sports – only involves bowling this year and is held after school.

Wellness Lab discussion – Adults in the school and community can use the wellness lab. All the equipment was either donated or purchased through a grant.

Discussion followed with respect to a Sport activity being incorporated as a credited class. Coaches are not educators. There are 12 ge's to be meant in physical education. How would this be measured? Jo Jo feels that Physical Education relieves stress and is taught prior to regular classes, not at the end of the day like a sport.

**Minutes:** George made a motion to approve the minutes of 3/2/11 with the following change: On line 24, change Clarendon to Clarendon Messenger. Karl seconded and motion unanimously passed.

The Board decided to wait until the next meeting to approve the minutes of Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Pay orders:**

Pay order dated 3/11/11	\$ 14,583.88
Pay order dated 3/16/11	\$ 29,801.51
Payroll dated 3/16/11	\$190,606.69

Karl made a motion to approve pay orders, Chip seconded. Unanimously approved.

**Common Core :** VT agreed with 30 other states to have the Common Core replace the GE's. Implementation schedule to follow. Necaps will also be replaced with a new assessment.

**NECAPS: Bernie Peatmen:** Historical presentation from the first year. State average vs. MR average of proficiency. Proficiency for the state is always 40 to be proficient. Reviewed the graphs indicating the scores.

Bernie says we have to set standards and decide how we obtain them and hold people accountable in order to raise our math scores.

Dana is in agreement with Bernie that you cannot create a system where any student gets left behind.

Andy RP would like to invite Bernie back and also the math department to speak again with the board.

Chip: Grade level science in grade 11 doesn't have a science requirement. Should graduation requirements be changed. Bernie said yes definitely.

Policy: 2<sup>nd</sup> reading on 5130 Student Eligibility for Co-Curricular Activities and 5110 School Attendance Procedures. George made a motion to approve the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading. Chip seconded. Approved unanimously. Next policy meeting is the first Tuesday in April at 4:30.

B&G: Andy RP received an email from Mike Gamache stating that they had applied for a grant for \$1,000 to support a community garden. They are looking at a spot on the western side of the Austin property. Building and grounds committee will meet with Steve Fowler and Mike Gamache about the garden and building work.

Finance: April 25<sup>th</sup> at 4:30.

Negotiations with staff. Chip will contact Deb Munson. Will need to meet on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

Supt. Report – written report – retreat – Thurs. 4/21 at 4:00 – maybe at the Howe Center.

Memorandum of Understanding – with the Vermont Department of Health – to be discussed at next meeting. Andy will make sure it is same document as before.

IT Report was in his written report. Karl thought it was great.

Resignations – two staff members Cochran and Abel turned in their letters stating their intention for retire. Also, an office support staff member has given her resignation notice.

Andy's report: Motion by Chip to accept the coaches as listed. Karl seconded. Unanimously approved.

Request for March of Dimes Remax Balloon to be located at MR for the March of Dimes Fundraiser. Board agreed.

Craig Shappy will update the board on class sizes at the next meeting.

**Other legal business:** Marty Wasserman sent greetings to board.

George shared that most work is done in committees which are open to the public.

**Agenda building:** Memo of Understanding with Vermont Department of Health, class size report, minutes of 1/5. Craig will share with board the list of staff presentations, NEASC assessments alternative.

Video recruiting – Put it on You Tube and email.

Doug – thank you to Peg Alderman for serving on the board.

**Executive session:** Andy made a motion to enter executive session at 9:25 for personnel issues. Karl seconded and the motion carried unanimously. The Board came out of executive session at 9:37 with no action taken.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charleen Bowen