

**Huntington School Board Meeting  
November 10, 2009**

Present: Becca Golden, Mike Dooling, Jen Peterson, Andrea Ogilvie, Lisanne Hegman, John Alberghini, Gail Webb, Joanne Machia

Guests: Tom Bailey, Becky Cozzens, Alison Forrest, Heather Godin, Helen Keith for the Times Ink

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 P.M.

**Public Comment/Outside Lighting:** Tom Bailey said he wanted to follow up on his concern with the lighting fixture outside the kitchen door. John said he and Gail asked electrician Stephen Linder to assess this fixture as well as other exterior lights, and Stephen recommended replacing the current fixture outside the kitchen door with a more standard flood light. The advantage to doing this would be that a flood light would be adjustable and could help direct the light better. Tom said he continues to wonder exactly what this fixture is designed to illuminate, whether it's the parking lot, the sidewalk, the kitchen door, etc. Alison said she uses the light to see the parking lot as well as the front entrance. Tom asked whether this new light would include a shield to ensure the light doesn't reach onto his property, and John said he or Gail would discuss a shield with Stephen.

John said Stephen also identified some other exterior lights that are in need of repair or possible replacement. Board members reviewed a diagram of exterior fixtures, and John said the estimate all the lighting work was \$2800. Andrea asked about utilizing funds from the repair and replacement fund to do this work, and John said this is a possibility. John also said he recently learned that the school's water system must have an overflow alarm installed before Dec. 2010, and the cost of the alarm is approx. \$3000.

**2010-2011 Budget Development:** Joanne Machia presented draft 2A of the budget for board review. She noted that the ADM has now been determined. Because Brewster Pierce's enrollment will be increasing slightly while two other elementary schools' numbers will be decreasing, the assessments for special education and central office will be increasing. Joanne said this change will also mean more flow-through money for special education, however. Joanne said that health insurance premiums will increase no more than 4.5%, and the exact figure will be available prior to the December board meeting.

This draft of the budget reflects a 1.15% increase over the current year. Gail had expressed her concern prior to this evening's meeting that the school may lose the services of paraprofessionals who are currently paid primarily with special education funds as the student(s) they work with move on to middle school. Gail said she feels the paraprofessionals are vital to the school in that they have been trained to provide intervention/support for students in key academic areas. Joanne said the salary and benefits for two half-day aides would cost the district \$38,748, and this change would make the total budget increase 3.28%.

Jen asked Gail about the funding needs discussed at the last board meeting, including money for furniture replacement and purchasing leveled reading texts as well as a spelling program. Gail and John explained that there is approximately \$29,000 in the current year's budget that will not be spent due to staffing and insurance changes. Gail said she plans to use these funds to address the need for materials and furniture. Board members agreed this makes sense. Becca Golden asked about the possibility of using funds from the anonymous grant that was given to the school last year, and Gail said she thought this would be a wonderful use for the funds. ***A motion was made by Jen Peterson to authorize the principal to purchase reading level texts, furniture and spelling program materials using 2009-2010 budget funds realized from personnel changes; seconded by Mike Dooling. Motion passed.***

Alison asked about the increase in funding for substitute teachers, and Heather and Becky said since teachers have to be out of the classroom more often for professional development, they feel the increase is necessary. Lianne asked about the increase in the guidance salary/benefits line, and Joanne said it was due to a change in insurance coverage. Andrea inquired about Title 1 funding, and John said the district will not have final numbers until spring.

John said all board members will soon receive a memo from the commissioner of education, and the memo presents some sobering information about the state's significant financial challenges. John said the memo urges school boards to work toward budgets with zero or negative growth. (A link to the memo can be found on the front page of the Chittenden East web site: [www.cesu.k12.vt.us](http://www.cesu.k12.vt.us)).

**Consent Agenda:** ***A motion was made by Jen Peterson to accept the consent agenda with the exception of the principal's report; seconded by Mike Dooling. Motion passed.*** Board members wanted to know more about Gail's plan to institute a new program to support students' development in reading and writing. Gail said she will visit classrooms to share some of her favorite stories as well as some of her own writing, and she will encourage students to share with her as well. Gail said she also sees this exchange as an opportunity to get to know the students better.

**Superintendent's Report-Governance:** John said the CESU executive committee has directed the CESU co-superintendents to investigate the statutory requirements for merging all of the individual CESU school districts into one larger school district. John said interest in such a consolidation has gained momentum from the discussion of moving 5<sup>th</sup> graders from the middle schools back to the elementary schools. John said the first step in the consolidation process would be to form a planning committee which would include one or more representatives from each CESU school district. The school districts would also share the costs for the committee, which is estimated at \$15,000 for the initial phase. Huntington's share of this cost would be \$624. John explained that efforts to consolidate school districts state-wide have been largely unsuccessful. He feels one of the main reasons is that while some towns would see their tax rates decrease as a result of a consolidation, other towns might see an increase.

Jen asked whether it might be possible to estimate the potential changes to each town's tax rate before spending too much time and money on exploring the idea. John said he would discuss the possibility with Laura Nassau. Alison said she would be willing to serve on the planning

committee. Andrea expressed concern that appropriating funds for this committee would be wasteful given the fairly reasonable expectation that any consolidation effort would be rejected. Becca said that although consolidation efforts have failed in other places, it doesn't mean the districts in Chittenden East would necessarily reject the idea. She said she feels it is important to give the towns the opportunity to at least consider the idea. ***A motion was made by Lisanne Hegman to approve the expenditure of \$624 for the Huntington school district's share of the governance planning committee; seconded by Jen Peterson. Motion passed.***

**Policy Vote:** Andrea presented two policies for potential board approval. ***A motion was made by Lisanne Hegman to approve the Student Education Records Policy; seconded by Mike Dooling. Motion passed. A motion was made by Mike Dooling to approve the Limited English Proficiency Policy; seconded by Lisanne Hegman. Motion passed.***

**Kindergarten/School Age Entry Age Policy:** Heather asked about the status of the kindergarten/ school age entry policy, and Andrea said the policy committee will continue working on this at their next meeting. Heather said she has observed that it sometimes causes problems when parents are given the final decision in regard to school entry or even retention. Andrea said new guidelines have been drafted which state that the school team would have the final decision on whether a waiver will be granted. The parents would then have the opportunity to appeal the decision to the superintendent. Several board members said they feel the policy should be named "Kindergarten Age Entry Policy" as opposed to "School Age Entry Policy."

**Next Meeting:** The next board meeting will be Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. in the Brewster Pierce library. Agenda items will include budget adoption for voter approval and planning for writing the annual town report.

**BPMS Warrants:** ***A motion was made by Jen Peterson to approve the monthly warrants in the amount of \$9,496.70; seconded by Mike Dooling. Motion passed.***

***A motion was made by Lisanne Hegman to adjourn into executive session for the purposes of discussing negotiations; seconded by Andrea Ogilvie. Motion passed.***

The meeting was adjourned to executive session at 9:16 P.M.

***A motion was made by Lisanne Hegman to adjourn from executive session; seconded by Andrea Ogilvie. Motion passed.*** No action taken.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amy Turner

Unofficial until approved