

12/15/09

Allen moved  
Breed second  
As corrected

**DORSET BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 24, 2009 – 6:00 P.M.  
THE DORSET SCHOOL LIBRARY**

**DORSET BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS:**

**Robert Allen: 768-8065; Liz Berard: 362-2949; Stephanie Breed, Clerk: 867-2531; David Chandler, Chairperson: 867-5533; James Salsgiver: 867-4115; James Merryman, Principal: 362-2602; BRSU Superintendent Daniel French: 362-2452**

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**Regular scheduled meetings held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise noticed.**

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**PRESENT: Board Members: Robert Allen, Stephanie Breed, David Chandler, and James Salsgiver; Principal Jim Merryman, Dorset Acct. Mgr. Dick Cepela and BRSU Supt. Dan French**

**ABSENT: Liz Berard**

**AUDIENCE: Jennifer Allen Andr s, Renee Bornstein, Laura McCostis, Amy Panetta and Cindy Tosone**

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**Chairperson David Chandler called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. in the library at The Dorset School.**

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

**• MEETING MINUTES:**

**Meeting Minutes of October 27, 2009 were approved as amended – Moved by Mr. Allen, seconded by Mr. Salsgiver, and so moved unanimously.**

**• REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS:**

**Mr. French reported on the following:**

- ▶ BUS BID: Superintendent French stated that Federal EPA stimulus money was available to qualifying school districts for up to \$40,000, for purchasing new school bus. He was currently working with administration from Manchester and Sunderland to submit a Federal grant on their behalf. General consensus of board members was that this would be a beneficial move for Dorset as well as the two aforementioned BRSU school districts. The board briefly discussed where the additional money would come from to purchase said bus. Mr. Salsgiver encouraged board members to re-examine the current bus routes for the Dorset school busses that provide services for the two towns and what routes will look like next school year. A Motion was made by Mr. Allen to have the Superintendent submit a Federal EPA Stimulus Grant application on behalf of the Dorset School District, with a total of up to \$40,000, to be used towards the purchase of a new school bus for the Dorset School, seconded by Mr. Salsgiver, and so moved unanimously.**
- ▶ HEALTH INSURANCE STIPEND: As recommended by Superintendent French, Personnel Benefits for Category A employees will be amended to include an “in lieu” of health insurance payments in the amount of \$2,000, retroactive to July 1, 2009. A Motion was made by Mr. Allen, seconded by Mrs. Breed, to include an “in lieu” credit of \$2,000 of health insurance credit and so Moved unanimously.**
- ▶ VT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION MEMO: Superintendent French distributed a copy of a recent memo**

from Armando Vilaseca, Vt. Commissioner of Education, regarding FY'2011 school budget recommendations. This memo recommended that all Vermont school districts use constraint during their budget preparations to contain costs of local property taxes and reduce their costs substantially. Other items within this memo detailed several ideas that could be presented to the State Legislature in January, including phasing out the Small Schools Grant to encourage small school consolidation, which would have an immediate impact upon The Dorset School, and requiring that all licensed education professional contracts require a minimum of 20% health care premium contributions. Audience member, Jennifer Allen-Andr s, asked board members what they thought would be the reaction of the VT Teachers Assoc. to statewide staffing reductions? Mr. Allen commented that there was a huge amount of pressure on all schools and the state legislature for lowering budgets. Mr. French added the rise in special education costs significantly impacts all Vermont school budgets, especially the special education overuse of paraprofessionals within the classrooms. He also relayed part of the conversation he recently held with VT Senator Hartwell regarding several educational areas, including a position paper Mr. French had written recommending consolidation of Sunderland and Manchester into one school district, and or Manchester and Dorset. Mr. Chandler suggested it might be beneficial to invite Senator Hartwell to attend an upcoming Dorset School Board meeting.

- ▶ **2010-2011 SCHOOL BUDGET:** The anticipated State tax rate will be announced on 12/1/09 by the VT Tax Commissioner. It is anticipated that there will be a one to two cent addition added for the teacher retirement system. During preliminary work on the Dorset School budget, it included retaining the Account Manager position for the local FY '11 school budget. He expected the board to adopt a budget during the January 2010 board meeting. The BRSU budget was approved by the BRSU Board. One of the areas of change for this BRSU budget was the consolidation of the BRSU Special Education and Early Education separate budgets into one singular budget line.
- ▶ **BUSINESS MANAGER POSITION:** As part of the continuing conversation regarding the Business/Account Manager position at The Dorset School to become part of the work load completed by Business Office of the BRSU, the Superintendent had completed a comparison of administrative staff for Dorset and the other remaining BRSU school districts. Mr. Chandler stated he had accompanied Mr. French on a tour of the Manchester Elementary Middle School and Mettawee School in Pawlet to look at how each school currently operates now that their business operations had been transferred to the Central Office of the BRSU. Mr. Chandler commented that the board needs to look at the entire system as a whole entity and not just one part of it. Part of the tour included discussion with the building principals, who endorsed the changes made. Other areas were still in question in some board members minds and further discussion will be held by board members, perhaps at a retreat held to discuss this item and other budget areas. The agenda for the retreat could also include quantifying the chart with the comparison administration staff of Dorset and other schools within the BRSU. Mr. Allen asked if this comparison sheet could be broken down into a plus and a negative configuration for the next board meeting.
- ▶ **ENDS POLICY:** Included in the board members packets were several examples of END Policies from two Vermont School Districts/Supervisory Unions, Hartford School District and Orange Southwest S.U. The superintendent

cautioned board members when they begin to develop their own ENDS Policy, they should not get bogged down on ways to measure their Policy, mainly because an ENDS Policy should be developed as a “means” not an “ends” to develop the important aspects desired by the community, staff and board. Further discussion from board members included whether or not a need existed to include an ENDS Policy for secondary students from Dorset in grades 9-12. It was agreed that this could open up conversations between the Dorset School Directors and the administrators of the secondary schools the Dorset Students attend. Mr. Salsgiver recommended that a memo be written and distributed to the teaching staff explaining just what an ENDS Policy entails, as well as some sort of communication to the community members explaining what was entailed in developing this Policy and asking for valuable community input.

- ▶ **BRSU PRIORITIES:** Superintendent French distributed copies of BRSU priorities. Mr. Salsgiver noted that many areas listed are still areas of study, and the priorities listed are not meant to be accomplished within a year. Mr. French noted that in reference to Transportation, he was planning to advertise for bids for bussing for four BRSU school districts (Danby/Mt. Tabor, Pawlet and Sunderland) for the 2011-2012 school year. Mr. Salsgiver reported that during the last BRSU Board meeting, one audience member asked questions about the action of the State Legislature and what changes did the superintendent and board members anticipate could/would be made during the next legislative session. This seems to be on everyone’s mind at budget time.
  
- **REPORT OF PRINCIPAL:**
- ▶ **ROOF BID:** Mr. Merryman reported that he had received five bids for roof replacement over the Math/Science rooms and secondary stairwell. He distributed a copy listing all five companies, and their submitted bids. Upon his recommendation, a Motion was made by Mr. Allen to award the contract for roof replacement as written to Doxsee Roofing Inc. for a total of \$31,560 with a 20-year manufacturer’s labor and materials warranty, seconded by Mr. Salsgiver, and so moved unanimously.
- ▶ **FIVE YEAR PLAN:** Mr. Merryman will reformat this Plan, which had been distributed to the board members. He will prioritize it by listing which areas will need to be addressed first. Mr. Salsgiver asked to have a Buildings and Grounds budget fund balance by beginning of each fiscal year, which would give the board the ability to understand the balance needed to maintain any area in case of an emergency situation for proper and preventative maintenance of the physical plant of the school and grounds.
- ▶ **ENROLLMENT FIGURES:** Mr. Merryman presented the board with a copy of anticipated class counts for the 2010-2011 school year. The figures listed or anticipated can vary dependent upon many variables, including number of tuition students attending The Dorset School and families leaving or moving into the community. At the present time, Mr. Merryman figured on 174 total students attending the school for the 2010-2011 school year. In answer to a question from an audience member, one of the two current first grade teachers will “loop” into the second grade due to the number of second grade students.
- ▶ **ENERGY GRANT POSSIBILITIES:** Mr. Merryman updated the board members about his recent visit to Montpelier where he spoke to several people about applying for Energy Grant money. He was told that the school might be eligible to receive a grant for up to \$100,000 for certain areas/categories pertaining to energy efficiency. He is considering applying for

one grant to assist with ~~phase~~ cost of replacement of heating plant and a second one for roof repair. Phase II of any grant would be done by the BRSU Central Office (federal grant through the state). Mr. Salsgiver informed board members that the Energy Committee was also exploring the possibilities of applying for energy-saving grants for the Fire Departments of Dorset and East Dorset.

- **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None at this time.

- **ACCOUNT MANAGERS REPORT:**

Mr. Cepela had prepared the Warrant for the board's approval and the following report for October 27 – November 23, 2009:

**REVENUE RECEIVED:**

HOT LUNCH REVENUE	5,042.00
BREAKFAST REVENUE	267.00
ARRA PAYMENT	263.00
TUITION – WINHALL	2,750.00
8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE FUNDRAISER	2,026.00
ADOPT-A-CLASS	3,000.00
DONATION	5,000.00
VT EFFICIENCY REBATE (SODA MISER)	90.00
LUNCH - FED REIMB	1,559.00
BREAKFAST – FED REIMB	73.00
“GO GREEN”DONATION	100.00
IN-MEMORY DONATIONS	200.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,370.00</b>

**WARRANT SUMMARY:**

FUND ACCT #	100	100-200	106	108	115	700	TOTAL WARRANT
FUND NAME	GENERAL	HOT LUNCH	SUPP FUND	ADOPT A CLASS	TECH FUND	8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE	
PAYROLL WARRANT: 10/30/09	43,120.38						43,120.38
PAYROLL AP WARRANT 11/02/09	14,578.36						14,578.36
AP WARRANT 11/12/09	30,234.07	423.06	263.37		1,895.65		32,816.15
PAYROLL WARRANT 11/13/09	50,378.53						50,378.53
PAYROLL AP WARRANT 11/16/09	26,179.44						26,179.44
AP WARRANT 11/20/09	97,761.77	2,892.99	953.30			206.26	101,7996.31
PAYROLL WARRANT 11/27/09	47,492.61						47,492.61
PAYROLL AP WARRANT (11/30/08)	15,477.04						15,477.04

TOTAL	325,222.20	3,316.05	1,198.67	0.00	1,895.65	206.25	268,869.17
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The Warrant was approved and signed.

● **NEW BUSINESS:**

- ▶ Superintendent French brought a student tuition issue to the board for their action. He requested tuition for a Dorset elementary student to attend a school other than The Dorset School. He requested tuition for said student to attend the Manchester Elementary Middle School on a temporary basis, and expects said student to transition back to The Dorset School later this school year. A Motion was made by Mr. Allen to approve tuition for a Dorset student to attend MEMS, seconded by Mr. Salsgiver and so moved unanimously.

● **OTHER BUSINESS:**

- ▶ **TEACHER RETIREMENT RECOGNITION COMMITTEE:** Mr. Salsgiver presented the board members with a written report that outlined the five areas proposed to recognize teachers retiring from The Dorset School. The report solicited response from the board members prior to solidifying any of the listed proposals. Mr. Salsgiver once again thanked Cindy Tosone for her willingness to assist him in this worthwhile endeavor.
- ▶ Mrs. Breed made an inquiry concerning the Discipline Policy of the school. She asked Mr. Merryman about the Discipline Policy and any difference between the Policy and Procedures for students from the upper (middle) level grades and the lower grades. Mr. Merryman reported that the Policy was printed in the Parent - Student Handbook, which was distributed in the summer of this school year. Mrs. Breed further inquired if there was a difference between pro-active and active discipline policies within the Discipline Policy of the school. Mr. Merryman explained that Mrs. Mitchell and the classroom teachers interact within each classroom prior to coming to the principal for further intervention. He further stated that his procedure includes warning, loss of privilege(s), detention and finally expulsion, as each case dictates. Mr. Chandler asked to see a copy of the printed Discipline Policy before the next board meeting.

There being no further business to come before the board, Chairperson David Chandler adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Betty Morsch  
12/02/09

**NEXT DORSET BOARD MEETINGS:**

- DEC. 15, 2009
- JAN. 12, 2010
- FEB. 23, 2010
- MAR. 1, 2010 TOWN MTG.
- MAR. 23, 2010